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Oresteia of Aeschylus;



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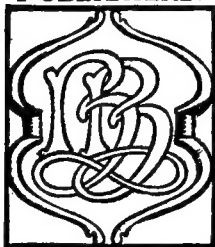






THE  
ORESTEIA OF AESCHYLUS

**PUBLISHERS.**



**CAMBRIDGE.**

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The Oresteia of Aeschylus  
Agamemnon, Choephoroi, Eumenides

THE GREEK TEXT

*as arranged for performance at Cambridge*

WITH

AN ENGLISH VERSE TRANSLATION

BY

R. C. TREVELYAN, B.A.

*Trinity College*

CAMBRIDGE : PRINTED AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS  
AND PUBLISHED FOR THE GREEK PLAY COMMITTEE BY

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

In arranging the text of the *Oresteia* for performance, the editor has endeavoured to preserve the balance of the composition, due regard being had to the fact that the modern orchestra enables the producer to obtain his lyrical effects more rapidly than was possible with the simpler ancient music. Though much has inevitably been sacrificed which he would have been glad to retain, he hopes that the *Trilogy*, as now arranged, will not appear to the reader to have become a series of disjointed episodes.

The text owes much to the critical work of the late Dr Walter Headlam. For two choral odes in the *Eumenides* (pp. 134 ff. and 140 ff.), the verse translation composed by the late Dr A. W. Verrall for an earlier performance of the *Eumenides* has been retained.

Mr R. C. Trevelyan's verse translation, which, by his generous permission, is now printed for the first time, follows the original line for line, and aims at reproducing the metrical pattern of Greek in the lyrical parts.

The music for the Cambridge performance has been composed by Mr C. Armstrong Gibbs. The vocal score will shortly be published by Messrs Goodwin and Tabb, Ltd.

J. T. S.

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

AGAMEMNON, *King of Argos, son of Atreus.*

CLYTAEMNESTRA, *his wife.*

ORESTES, *his son.*

ELECTRA, *his daughter.*

AEGISTHUS, *his cousin and enemy, paramour of Clytaem-  
nestra.*

PYLADES, *son of Strophius, friend of Orestes.*

CASSANDRA, *daughter of Priam, King of Troy.*

A WATCHMAN, *loyal to Agamemnon.*

HERALD *of Agamemnon.*

NURSE *of Orestes.*

SERVANT *of Aegisthus.*

PYTHIAN PROPHETESS.

APOLLO.

ATHENE.

HERMES.

CHORUS of ARGIVE ELDERS, TROJAN BONDWOMEN, and  
FURIES.

*Retinue of Agamemnon, Women attendant on Clytaemnestra,  
Bodyguard of Aegisthus, Areopagites, Athenian  
Women, etc.*

THE AGAMEMNON  
OF  
AESCHYLUS

## THE AGAMEMNON

*Before the royal palace at Argos. Night.*

### WATCHMAN

The Gods have I besought for my release  
This whole long year of vigil, wherein couched  
On the Atreidae's roof on bent arms, dogwise,  
I have learnt the nightly sessions of the stars,  
Those chiefly that bring storm and heat to men,  
The bright conspicuous dynasts of the sky.  
Still am I watching for the signal flame,  
A beam of fire carrying news from Troy  
And tidings of its capture: so dictates  
A woman's sanguine heart to a man's will joined.  
Now when upon my restless dew-damp couch  
I have laid me down, this bed of mine where dreams  
Haunt not: for fear instead of sleep stands by—  
Oft as I have a mind to sing or hum,  
A tune in slumber's stead by way of salve,  
Then do I weep the fortunes of this house  
No more so wisely managed as of old.  
But now blessed release from toil be mine,  
And the fire's happy tidings shine through gloom.

Oh hail, thou lamp, that dawnest on the night  
Like daybreak, heralding in Argos many  
A choral dance for joy at this good hap!  
Ioû! Ioû!



## THE AGAMEMNON

*Before the royal palace at Argos. Night.*

ΦΥΛΑΞ

Θεοὺς μὲν αἰτῶ τῶνδ' ἀπαλλαγὴν πόνων  
φρουρᾶς ἐτείας μῆκος, ἦν κοιμώμενος  
στέγαις Ἀτρείδων ἄγκαθεν, κυνὸς δίκην,  
ἄστρον κάτοιδα νυκτέρων ὀμήγυριν,  
καὶ τοὺς φέροντας χεῖμα καὶ θέρος βροτοῖς 5  
λαμπροὺς δυνάστας, ἐμπρέποντας αἰθέρι·  
καὶ νῦν φυλάσσω λαμπάδος τὸ σύμβολον,  
αὐγὴν πυρὸς φέρουσαν ἐκ Τροίας φάτιν  
ἀλώσιμόν τε βάξι· ὦδε γὰρ κρατεῖ  
γυναικὸς ἀνδρόβουλον ἐλπίζον κέαρ. 10  
εὐτ' ἂν δὲ νυκτίπλαγκτον ἔνδροσόν τ' ἔχω  
εὐνήν ὀνειροῖς οὐκ ἐπισκοπούμενην  
ἐμήν· φόβος γὰρ ἀνθ' ὕπνου παραστατεῖ·  
ὅταν δ' αἰεῖδειν ἢ μινύρεσθαι δοκῶ,  
ὕπνου τόδ' ἀντίμολπον ἐντέμνων ἄκος, 15  
κλαίω τότ' οἴκου τοῦδε συμφορὰν στένων  
οὐχ ὡς τὰ πρόσθ' ἄριστα διαπονουμένου.  
νῦν δ' εὐτυχῆς γένοιτ' ἀπαλλαγὴ πόνων  
εὐαγγέλου φανέντος ὀρφναίου πυρός.

ὦ χαῖρε λαμπτήρ, νυκτὸς ἡμερήσιοι 20  
φάος πιφάυσκων καὶ χορῶν κατάστασιν  
πολλῶν ἐν Ἀργεῖ, τῆσδε συμφορᾶς χάριν.  
ιοῦ ἰοῦ.

Agamemnon's queen thus loudly do I summon  
 To arise from her couch and lift within  
 The house forthwith a shout of holy joy  
 To greet yon light, if verily Ilium's town  
 Be captured, as the announcing beacon boasts.  
 For the rest I keep silence: on my tongue  
 A great ox treads: though, had it speech, this house  
 Might tell a plain tale. I, for folk who know,  
 Speak gladly: for know-nothings I forget.

[*Exit* WATCHMAN. CLYTAEMNESTRA'S *cry of triumph*  
*is heard within. Enter* CHORUS OF ELDERS.]

## CHORUS

'Tis the tenth year now since Priam's mighty  
 Avenging foe,  
 Meneläus, and king Agamemnon too,  
 From the shores of Greece launched forth with a  
 Argive crews [thousand  
 United in armed federation.  
 Loud rang their wrathful warcry forth,  
 As the scream of vultures robbed of their young,  
 When in mountain solitudes over their eyrie  
 They wheel and circle  
 With endless beating of oarlike wings,  
 Reft of the nestlings  
 Their watchful labour had tended.  
 But above there is one, be it Apollo,  
 Or Pan, or Zeus, who hearing the shrill  
 Sad cry of those birds, his suppliant wards,  
 Shall one day send  
 Retribution upon the offenders.  
 Unsolved the event  
 Still waiteth: and yet to an issue is moving.

Ἄγαμέμνονος γυναικὶ σημαίνω τορῶς  
 εὐνήης ἐπαντείλασαν ὡς τάχος δόμοις 25  
 ὄλολυγμὸν εὐφημοῦντα τῆδε λαμπάδι  
 ἐπορθιάζειν, εἴπερ Ἴλιου πόλις  
 ἐάλωκεν, ὡς ὁ φρυκτὸς ἀγγέλλων πρέπει·  
 τὰ δ' ἄλλα σιγῶ· βούς ἐπὶ γλώσση μέγας  
 βέβηκεν· οἶκος δ' αὐτός, εἰ φθογγὴν λάβοι, 30  
 σαφέστατ' ἂν λέξειεν· ὡς ἐκὼν ἐγὼ  
 μαθοῦσιν αὐδῶ κοῦ μαθοῦσι λήθομαι.

[Exit WATCHMAN. CLYTAEMNESTRA'S cry of triumph.  
 is heard within. Enter CHORUS OF ELDERS.]

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

δέκατον μὲν ἔτος τόδ' ἐπεὶ Πριάμου  
 μέγας ἀντίδικος,  
 Μενέλαος ἀναξ ἠδ' Ἄγαμέμνων, 35  
 στόλον Ἀργείων χιλιοναύτην  
 τῆσδ' ἀπὸ χώρας  
 ἦραν, στρατιῶτιν ἀρωγὴν,  
 μέγαν ἐκ θυμοῦ κλάζοντες Ἄρη  
 τρόπον αἰγυπιῶν, οὔτ' ἐκπατίοις 40  
 ἄλγεσι παίδων ὑπατηλεχέων  
 στροφοδινοῦνται  
 πτερύγων ἐρετμοῖσιν ἐρεσσόμενοι,  
 δεμνιοτήρη  
 πόνον ὀρταλίχων ὀλέσαντες· 45  
 ὑπατος δ' αἶων ἢ τις Ἀπόλλων  
 ἢ Πᾶν ἢ Ζεὺς οἰωνόθροον  
 γόον ὀξυβόαν τῶνδε μετοίκων,  
 ὑστερόποινον  
 πέμπει παραβᾶσιν Ἐρινύν. 50  
 ἔστι δ' ὄπη νῦν  
 ἔστι· τελεῖται δ' ἐς τὸ πεπρωμένον·

Neither oil poured over nor fire lit beneath  
 Shall temper the stubborn  
 Wrath for the sacrifice unburnt.

[*Enter* CLYTAEMNESTRA.]

But thou, O daughter  
 Of Tyndareus, Clytaemnestra, Queen,  
 What hath chanced? What tidings have reached  
 That at every shrine [thine ears,  
 Thou commandest ritual oblations?  
 And of all those Gods that frequent our town,  
 From on high, from beneath,  
 Whether heavenly sublime, or of earthlier power,  
 Glowing with gifts are the altars.  
 And on all sides one by one bright flames  
 Skyward are leaping,  
 Medicined and nursed by the innocent spell  
 And soft persuasion of hallowed gums,  
 Rich unguent stored for a King's use.  
 Hereof what can and may be revealed  
 Deign thou to declare,  
 And so be the healer of this my doubt,  
 Which now to an evil boding sinks,  
 But anon from the sacrifice Hope grown kind  
 Drives back from the soul those ravening thoughts,  
 That grief that gnaws at the heart-roots.

I am come, Clytaemnestra, reverencing  
 Thy will; for it is just that we should honour  
 The sovereign's wife, when the throne lacks its lord.  
 Now whether certified, or but in hope  
 Of happy news, thou makest sacrifice,  
 Fain would I know; yet shall not grudge thee silence.

οὐθ' ὑποκαίων οὐτ' ἐπιλείβων  
 ἀπύρων ἱερῶν  
 ὄργας ἀτενεῖς παραθέλξει.

55

[Enter CLYTAEMNESTRA.]

σὺ δέ, Τυνδάρεω  
 θύγατερ, βασίλεια Κλυταιμῆστρα,  
 τί χρέος; τί νέον; τί δ' ἐπαισθομένη,  
 τίνος ἀγγελίας

    πευθοῖ περίπεμπτα θυοσκεῖς;  
 πάντων δὲ θεῶν τῶν ἀστυνόμων,  
 ὑπάτων, χθονίων,  
 τῶν τ' οὐρανίων τῶν τ' ἀγοραίων,  
 βωμοὶ δώροισι φλέγονται·

60

ἄλλη δ' ἄλλοθεν οὐρανομήκης  
 λαμπὰς ἀνίσχει,

65

φαρμασσομένη χρίματος ἀγνοῦ  
 μαλακαῖς ἀδόλοισι παρηγορίαις,  
 πελάνῳ μυχόθεν βασιλείῳ.

τούτων λέξασ' ὅ τι καὶ δυνατὸν  
 καὶ θέμις αἰνεῖν,

70

παιῶν τε γενοῦ τῆσδε μερίμνης,  
 ἢ νῦν τοτὲ μὲν κακόφρων τελέθει,  
 τότε δ' ἐκ θυσιῶν τὴν θυμοβόρον  
 φροντίδ' ἄπληστον  
 φαίνουσ' ἀγάν' ἐλπίς ἀμύνει.

75

ἤκω σεβίζων σόν, Κλυταιμῆστρα, κράτος·  
 δίκη γάρ ἐστι φωτὸς ἀρχηγοῦ τίειν  
 γυναικ' ἐρημωθέντος ἄρσενος θρόνου.  
 σὺ δ' εἴ τι κεδνὸν εἶτε μὴ πεπυσμένη  
 εὐαγγέλοισιν ἐλπίσιν θυηπολεῖς,  
 κλύοιμ' ἂν εὐφρων· οὐδὲ σιγῶση φθόνος.

80

## CLYTAEMNESTRA

With happy tidings, so the proverb runs,  
 May the dawn issue from her mother night.

But hear now joy greater than any hope:  
 For the Argives have captured Priam's town.

*Ch.* How sayst thou? I scarce heard through unbelief.

*Cl.* The Achaeans now hold Troy. Do I speak plain?

*Ch.* Joy overwhelms me, calling forth a tear.

*Cl.* Thine eye convicts thee of a loyal joy.

*Ch.* But where's thy warrant? Hast thou proof of this?

*Cl.* I have. Why not? Unless a God deceives me.

*Ch.* Dost thou respect a dream's delusive phantoms?

*Cl.* A drowsing mind's fancy I should not utter.

*Ch.* Hath some vague unwinged rumour cheered thy soul?

*Cl.* My wits thou wouldst disparage like a girl's.

*Ch.* How long then is it since the town was sacked?

*Cl.* This very night that gives birth to yon dawn.

*Ch.* And what messenger could arrive so speedily?

*Cl.* Hephaestus, from Ida flinging the bright glare.

Then beacon hitherward with posting flame

Sped beacon; Ida first to Hermes' rock

On Lemnos; from whose isle Athos, the peak

Of Zeus, was third to accept the mighty brand;

Nor did the watch deny the far-spiced glow,

But made their bonfire higher than was enjoined.

Then over lake Gorgopis the beam shot,

And having reached mount Aigiplanctus, there

Urged swift performance of the fiery rite.

Kindling they launch with generous energy

A mighty beard of flame which could o'erpass

## ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

- εὐάγγελος μὲν, ὥσπερ ἡ παροιμία,  
 ἕως γένοιτο μητρὸς εὐφρόνης πάρα.  
 πεύσει δὲ χάρμα μείζον ἐλπίδος κλύειν· 85  
 Πριάμου γὰρ ἠρήκασιν Ἀργεῖοι πόλιν.
- Χο. πῶς φῆς; πέφευγε τοῦπος ἐξ ἀπιστίας.  
 Κλ. Τροίαν Ἀχαιῶν οὔσαν· ἡ τορῶς λέγω;  
 Χο. χαρά μ' ὑφέρπει δάκρυον ἐκκαλουμένη.  
 Κλ. εὖ γὰρ φρονουῦντος ὄμμα σοῦ κατηγορεῖ. 90  
 Χο. τί γὰρ τὸ πιστόν; ἔστι τῶνδέ σοι τέκμαρ;  
 Κλ. ἔστιν· τί δ' οὐχί; μὴ δολώσαντος θεοῦ.  
 Χο. πότερα δ' ὀνείρων φάσματ' εὐπιθῆ σέβεις;  
 Κλ. οὐ δόξαν ἂν λάκοιμι βριζούσης φρενός.  
 Χο. ἀλλ' ἡ σ' ἐπίανέν τις ἄπτερος φάτις; 95  
 Κλ. παιδὸς νέας ὡς κάρτ' ἐμωμήσω φρένας.  
 Χο. ποίου χρόνου δὲ καὶ πεπόρθηται πόλις;  
 Κλ. τῆς νῦν τεκούσης φῶς τόδ' εὐφρόνης λέγω.
- Χο. καὶ τίς τόδ' ἐξίκοιτ' ἂν ἀγγέλων τάχος;  
 Κλ. Ἡφαιστος Ἴδης λαμπρὸν ἐκπέμπων σέλας. 100  
 φρυκτὸς δὲ φρυκτὸν δεῦρ' ἀπ' ἀγγάρου πυρὸς  
 ἔπεμπεν· Ἴδη μὲν πρὸς Ἑρμαῖον λέπας  
 Δήμνου· μέγαν δὲ πανὸν ἐκ νήσου τρίτον  
 Ἄθων αἶπος Ζηνὸς ἐξεδέξατο.
- φάος δὲ τηλέπομπου οὐκ ἠναίνετο 105  
 φρουρὰ πλέουσα καίουσα τῶν εἰρημένων,  
 λίμνην δ' ὑπὲρ Γοργῶπιν ἔσκηψεν φάος·  
 ὄρος τ' ἐπ' Αἰγίπλαγκτον ἐξικνούμενον  
 ὠτρυνε θεσμὸν μὴ χρονίζεσθαι πυρός.  
 πέμπουσι δ' ἀνδαίοντες ἀφθόνῳ μένει 110  
 φλογὸς μέγαν πώγωνα, καὶ Σαρωνικοῦ

The cliff that frowns o'er the Saronic gulf  
 Far flaring: then it alighted, then it reached  
 Arachne's sentinel peak, our city's neighbour.  
 And last here on the Atreidae's roof comes home  
 This light, true-fathered heir of Ida's fire.

These are the stages of my torch-racers,  
 Thus in succession each from each fulfilled.  
 But he's the winner who ran from first to last.  
 Such is the proof and token that I give thee,  
 This message sped to me by my lord from Troy.

*Ch.* Lady, the Gods hereafter would I praise.  
 But first would I fain satisfy my wonder  
 Hearing thy tale from point to point retold.

*Cl.* This day do the Achaeans possess Troy.  
 'Tis loud, I ween, with cries that blend not well.  
 Pour vinegar and oil in the same cruse,  
 And you would say they sundered without love.  
 Even so the cries of conquerors and captives  
 Sound distinct as their differing fortunes are.  
 These falling around the bodies of their husbands  
 And brothers slain, children it may be clasping  
 Gray-headed sires, from throats no longer free  
 Bewail the fate of those whom most they loved;  
 While these a weary night of roving sends  
 Hungry from battle to whatever fare  
 The town affords, not marshalled orderly,  
 Rather, as each has snatched his lot of luck,  
 Within the captured palaces of Troy  
 They are housing now, delivered from the frosts  
 And dews of the bare sky; and blessedly  
 Without watch will they sleep the whole night long.  
 Now if they show due reverence to the Gods



πορθμοῦ κάτοπτον πρῶν' ὑπερβάλλειν πρόσω  
 φλέγουσαν· εἶτ' ἔσκηψεν, εἶτ' ἀφίκετο  
 Ἄραχναῖον αἶπος, ἀστυγείτονας σκοπᾶς·  
 κᾶπειτ' Ἀτρειδῶν ἐς τόδε σκῆπτει στέγος 115  
 φάος τόδ' οὐκ ἄπαππον Ἰδαίου πυρός.

τοιοῖδε τοί μοι λαμπαδηφόρων νόμοι,  
 ἄλλος παρ' ἄλλου διαδοχαῖς πληρούμενοι·  
 νικᾷ δ' ὁ πρῶτος καὶ τελευταῖος δραμῶν.  
 τέκμαρ τοιοῦτο σύμβολόν τε σοὶ λέγω 120  
 ἀνδρὸς παραγγείλαντος ἐκ Τροίας ἐμοί.

Χο. θεοῖς μὲν αὖθις, ὦ γύναι, προσεύξομαι.  
 λόγους δ' ἀκοῦσαι τούσδε κάποθαυμάσαι  
 διηνεκῶς θέλοιμ' ἂν ὡς λέγοις πάλιν.

Κλ. Τροίαν Ἀχαιοὶ τῆδ' ἔχουσ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ. 125  
 οἶμαι βοῆν ἄμικτον ἐν πόλει πρέπειν.  
 ὄξος τ' ἄλειφά τ' ἐγχείας ταύτῳ κύτει  
 διχοστατοῦντ' ἂν, οὐ φίλω, προσεννέποις.  
 καὶ τῶν ἀλόντων καὶ κρατησάντων δίχα  
 φθογγὰς ἀκούειν ἔστι συμφορᾶς διπλῆς. 130

οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἀμφὶ σώμασιν πεπτωκότες  
 ἀνδρῶν κασιγνήτων τε καὶ φυταλμίων  
 παῖδες γερόντων οὐκέτ' ἐξ ἐλευθέρου  
 δέρης ἀποιμώζουσι φιλτάτων μόρον·  
 τοὺς δ' αὖτε νυκτίπλαγκτος ἐκ μάχης πόνος 135  
 νῆστεις πρὸς ἀρίστοισιν ὧν ἔχει πόλις  
 τάσσει, πρὸς οὐδὲν ἐν μέρει τεκμήριον,  
 ἀλλ' ὡς ἕκαστος ἔσπασεν τύχης πάλου,  
 ἐν αἰχμαλώτοις Τρωικοῖς οἰκήμασιν  
 ναίουσιν ἤδη, τῶν ὑπαιθρίων πάγων 140  
 δρόσων τ' ἀπαλλαχθέντες, ὡς δ' εὐδαίμονες  
 ἀφύλακτον εὐδήσουσι πᾶσαν εὐφρόνην.  
 εἰ δ' εὖ σέβουσι τοὺς πολιτισσούχους θεοὺς

That guard the conquered land, and spare their shrines,  
 Then may the spoilers not in turn be spoiled.  
 But let no ill-timed lust assail the host  
 Mastered by greed to plunder what they ought not.  
 For they have need to win safe passage home.  
 And if the returning host escape Heaven's wrath,  
 The hatred of the dead might haply grow  
 Less hostile—if no sudden ill befall.  
 To such fears I, a woman, must give voice.  
 Yet may good triumph manifestly past doubt;  
 Of many blessings now would I taste the fruit.

*Ch.* Lady, sober like a wise man's is thy speech.  
 Now, having heard proof so trustworthy from thee,  
 I will address myself to thank the Gods.  
 Their grace is recompense for all our toils.

[*Exit* CLYTAEMNESTRA.]

O sovereign Zeus! O gracious Night,  
 Who hast won so measureless a glory!  
 Who over the towers of Troy didst cast  
 Such a close-drawn net, that none of the great,  
 Nor yet of the young should escape the immense  
 Ensnaring mesh  
 Of thraldom and doom universal.  
 Zeus, God of guest-right, great I confess him,  
 Who hath wrought this vengeance; against Alexander  
 His bow did he hold long bent, that neither  
 Short of the mark his bolt should alight,  
 Nor beyond the stars speed idly.

| From Zeus came the stroke that felled them: yea that  
 | Is sure truth: clearly may we trace it.  
 | As He determined, so they fared. The fool said,



"The Gods above heed not when the loveliness  
 Of sanctity is trampled down  
 By mortals." Oh blasphemy!  
 'Tis plain now and manifest  
 The wage paid for reckless sin,  
 The doom due to insolent presumption,  
 Whene'er in kings' houses wealth superfluous  
 Beyond the mean teemeth. Yea, let there be  
 What contents without want  
 Soberly minded wisdom.

No strong fortress against fate  
 Hath that man who in wealth's pride  
 Spurns from sight as a thing of naught  
 The mighty altar of Justice.

Yet strong is that obstinate Temptation,  
 The dire child of fore-designing Ate.  
 Then all in vain is remedy: unhidden  
 The mischief glows: baleful is the gleam thereof.  
 Like metal base, touched and rubbed  
 By a testing stone, even so  
 In him too trial reveals  
 A black stain. Like a child  
 A winged bird vainly he pursueth.  
 A dire taint lays he on all his people.  
 To prayers the Gods' ears are deaf. Whosoe'er  
 Even consorts with such men,  
 Shares in their guilt and ruin.

Even so Paris, a house-guest  
 Honoured by the Atreidae,  
 Did foul wrong to his host's board  
 By his theft of a woman.

θεοὺς βροτῶν ἀξιοῦσθαι μέλειν  
 ὅσοις ἀθίκτων χάρις  
 πατοῖθ'· ὁ δ' οὐκ εὐσεβής.  
 πέφανται δ' ἐκτίνου-  
 σ' ἀτολμήτων ἀρά,  
 πνεόντων μείζον ἢ δικαίως,  
 φλεόντων δωμάτων ὑπέρφεν  
 ὑπὲρ τὸ βέλτιστον. ἔστω δ' ἀπή-  
 μαντον, ὥστ' ἀπαρκεῖν  
 εὖ πραπίδων λαχόντα.  
 οὐ ἔστιν γὰρ ἔπαλξις  
 πλούτου πρὸς κόρον ἀνδρὶ  
 λακτίσαντι μέγαν Δίκας  
 βωμὸν εἰς ἀφάνειαν.

βιᾶται δ' ἅ τάλαινα Πειθῶ, [ἀντ. α.  
 προβούλου παῖς ἄφερτος Ἄτας.  
 ἄκος δὲ παμμάταιον. οὐκ ἐκρύφθη, 190  
 πρέπει δέ, φῶς αἰνολαμπές, σίνος·  
 κακοῦ δὲ χαλκοῦ τρόπου  
 τρίβῳ τε καὶ προσβολαῖς  
 μελαμπαγῆς πέλει  
 δικαιωθείς, ἐπεὶ 195  
 διώκει παῖς ποτανὸν ὄρνιν,  
 πόλει πρόστριμμ' ἄφερτον ἐνθείς.  
 λιτᾶν δ' ἀκούει μὲν οὔτις θεῶν·  
 τὸν δ' ἐπίστροφον τῶν  
 φῶτ' ἄδικον καθαιρεῖ. 200  
 οἶος καὶ Πάρις ἐλθὼν  
 ἐς δόμον τὸν Ἀτρειδᾶν  
 ἤσχυνε ξενίαν τράπε-  
 ζαν κλοπαῖσι γυναικός.

Bequeathing to her countrymen noise of shields  
 Together clashed, thronging spears, stir of vesse  
     arming,

And bearing death instead of dower to Ilium,  
 With light step through the gates <sup>she</sup> is flown  
 On reckless venture. Sore the wailing then  
 Throughout the halls, doleful voices crying:

“Ah home of woe! Home and woeful princes, wail  
 Ah woeful bed, printed yet with love's embrace!  
 Behold the spouse! Bowed with shame, there he sit  
 In silent unreviling grief. [apar

For her beyond seas he yearns:

Pined with dreams sits he, a sceptred phantom.

Hateful now to his mood seems

The grace of loveliest statues.

Lost the light of her eyes, and lost

Now the love they enkindled.

Anon there come dream-revealed semblances,  
 Beguiling shapes. Brief the joy, vain the sweet de  
     lusion.

For vainly, when he seems to view the phantom bliss  
 Between his arms, lo! the vision is flown  
 And vanishes away beyond recall

On shadowy wings down the paths of slumber.”

Beside the hearth, within the royal palace, such

The grief that haunts, yea and woes transcending these

But for the host, all who once launched from Hellas

Some woman now with suffering heart [shore

In every house mourning sits.

Wounds enough pierce them to the soul's core.

Whom they sent to the war, them

λιποῦσα δ' ἀστοῖσιν ἀσπίστορας [στρ. β. 205  
 κλόνας τε καὶ λογχίμους  
 ναυβάτας θ' ὄπλισμούς,  
 ἄγουσά τ' ἀντίφερνον Ἰλίῳ φθορὰν  
 βέβακεν ῥίμφα διὰ πυλᾶν  
 ἄτλητα τλᾶσα· πολλὰ δ' ἔστενον 210  
 τόδ' ἐννέποντες δόμων προφήται·  
 ἰὼ ἰὼ δῶμα δῶμα καὶ πρόμοι,  
 ἰὼ λέχος καὶ στίβοι φιλάνορες.  
 πάρεστι σιγὰς ἀτίμους ἀλοιδόρους  
 ἄλγιστ' ἀφημένων ἰδεῖν. 215  
 πόθῳ δ' ὑπερποντίας  
 φάσμα δόξει δόμων ἀνάσσειν.  
 εὐμόρφων δὲ κολοσσῶν  
 ἔχθεται χάρις ἀνδρί·  
 ὀμμάτων δ' ἐν ἀχηνίαις 220  
 ἔρρει πᾶσ' Ἀφροδίτα.

ὄνειρόφαντοι δὲ πειθήμονες [ἀντ. β.  
 πάρεισι δόξαι φέρου-  
 σαι χάριν ματαίαν.  
 μάταν γάρ, εὖτ' ἂν ἐσθλά τις δοκῶν ὄρᾶν— 225  
 παραλλάξασα διὰ χερῶν,  
 βέβακεν ὄψις οὐ μεθύστερον  
 πτεροῖς ὀπαδοῦσ' ὕπνου κελεύθους·  
 τὰ μὲν κατ' οἴκους ἐφ' ἐστίας ἄχη  
 τάδ' ἐστὶ καὶ τῶνδ' ὑπερβατώτερα. 230  
 τὸ πᾶν δ' ἀφ' Ἑλλανος αἴας συνορμένους  
 πενθεῖ' ἀτλησικάρδιος  
 δόμων ἐκάστου πρέπει.  
 πολλὰ γοῦν θιγγάνει πρὸς ἧπαρ.  
 οὓς μὲν γάρ τις ἔπεμψεν 235

They know: but now in the man's stead  
 Naught comes back to the home of each  
 Save an urn and some ashes.

The merchant Ares—dead men's bodies are his go'd—  
 He whose scales weigh the poisoning fate of war,  
 From pyres beneath Ilium  
 To those that loved them sendeth home  
 Heavy sore-lamented dust,  
 Stowing ash that once was man  
 Into the compass of a jar.  
 Then mourning each they tell his praise,  
 How one in craft of war was skilled,  
 How that one nobly shed his blood,—  
 "All for a woman, wife to another,"  
 So an angry whisper snarls forth;  
 And against the sons of Atreus  
 An accusing grief spreads.

Others under the wall, slain  
 In their beauty, possess graves  
 There 'neath Ilian earth, that now  
 Hides in hate her possessors.

A people's talk, charged with wrath, is perilous.  
 Oft 'tis proved potent as a public curse.  
 My boding heart waits to hear  
 Some news that night shroudeth still.  
 For on men of blood the Gods'  
 Eyes are fixed; and late or soon  
 Will the dark Erinues doom  
 The man who thrives unrighteously  
 To waste and dwindle luckless down,  
 Until his light be quenched: and once



οἶδεν, ἀντιδὲ φωτῶν  
τεύχη καὶ σποδὸς εἰς ἑκά-  
στου δόμους ἀφικνεῖται.

ὁ χρυσαμοιβὸς δ' Ἄρης σωμάτων [στρ. γ.  
καὶ ταλαντοῦχος ἐν μάχῃ δορὸς 240  
πυρωθὲν ἐξ Ἴλιου

φίλοισι πέμπει βαρὺ  
ψῆγμα δυσδάκρυτον ἀν-  
τήνορος σποδοῦ γεμί-  
ζων λέβητας εὐθέτους. 245

στένουσι δ' εὖ λέγοντες ἄν-  
δρα τὸν μὲν ὡς μάχης ἴδρις,  
τὸν δ' ἐν φοναῖς καλῶς πεσόντ'—  
'ἀλλοτρίας διαὶ γυναικός·'  
τάδε σῆγά τις βαύζει· 250

φθονερὸν δ' ὑπ' ἄλγος ἔρπει  
προδίκους Ἀτρεΐδαις.

οἱ δ' αὐτοῦ περὶ τείχος  
θήκας Ἰλιάδος γᾶς  
εὐμορφοὶ κατέχουσιν· ἐ-  
χθρὰ δ' ἔχοντας ἔκρυψεν. 255

βαρεῖα δ' ἀστῶν φάτις ξὺν κότῳ· [ἀντ. γ.  
δημοκράντου δ' ἀρᾶς τίνει χρέος.  
μένει δ' ἀκοῦσαί τί μου  
μέριμνα νυκτηρεφές. 260

τῶν πολυκτόνων γὰρ οὐκ  
ἄσκοποι θεοί. κελαι-  
ναὶ δ' Ἐριυέες χρόνῳ  
τυχηρὸν ὄντ' ἄνευ δίκας  
παλιτυχεῖ τριβᾶ βίου 265  
τιθεῖσ' ἀμαυρόν, ἐν δ' αἰ-

Lost in the darkness, who shall help him?  
 In excess of glory is peril.  
 For on mortals overweening  
 Are the bolts of Zeus sped.  
 Mine be fortune unenvied.  
 No walled towns would I conquer,  
 Nor yet live to behold my age  
 Slave to alien masters.

[*Enter a* HERALD.]

HERALD

O land of Argos, thou my native soil,  
 To thee this tenth-born year do I return,  
 Of many broken hopes still grasping one.  
 Ne'er could I dream here in this Argive earth  
 Dying to share that burial I so longed for.  
 O palace of our kings, beloved abode,  
 Ye solemn seats, and ye, dawn-fronting Deities,  
 If e'er of old, with radiant eyes this day  
 Welcome with pomp our king so long time gone.  
 For to you and to all these alike returns  
 Prince Agamemnon, bringing light in gloom.  
 Come, ye must greet him joyfully, as beseems,  
 Who with the mattock of Avenging Zeus  
 Hath digged down Troy, and ploughed her soil to dust.  
 Having laid on Troy so fell a yoke, the elder  
 Of Atreus' children, fortunate among princes,  
 Returns, of all men living worthiest praise.

*Ch.* Joy to thee, herald of the Achaean host!

*Her.* Joy is mine. Now let me die, if heaven so wills.

*Ch.* Hath longing for thy fatherland so tortured thee?

*Her.* So that for joy mine eyes weep tears upon it.

στοις τελέθοντος οὔτις ἀλκά·  
 τὸ δ' ὑπερκόπως κλύειν εὖ  
 βαρύ· βάλλεται γὰρ ὄσσοις  
 Διόθεν κεραυνός. 270  
 κρίνω δ' ἄφθονον ὄλβον·  
 μήτ' εἶην πτολιπόρθης  
 μήτ' οὖν αὐτὸς ἀλοὺς ὑπ' ἄλ-  
 λω βίον κατίδοιμι.

[Enter a HERALD.]

ΚΗΡΥΞ

ἰὼ πατρῶον οὔδας Ἀργείας χθονός, 275  
 δεκάτῳ σε φέγγει τῷδ' ἀφικόμην ἔτους,  
 πολλῶν ῥαγισῶν ἐλπίδων μιᾶς τυχών.  
 οὐ γάρ ποτ' ἠὔχουν τῆδ' ἐν Ἀργείᾳ χθονὶ  
 θανῶν μεθέξειν φιλτάτου τάφου μέρος.  
 ἰὼ μέλαθρα βασιλέων, φίλαι στέγαι, 280  
 σεμνοὶ τε θᾶκοι, δαίμονές τ' ἀντήλιοι,  
 εἴ που πάλαι, παιδροῖσι τοισίδ' ὄμμασι  
 δέξασθε κόσμῳ βασιλέα πολλῷ χρόνῳ.  
 ἦκει γὰρ ὑμῖν φῶς ἐν εὐφρόνῃ φέρων  
 καὶ τοῖσδ' ἅπασι κοινὸν Ἀγαμέμνων ἀναξ. 285  
 ἀλλ' εὖ νιν ἀσπάσασθε, καὶ γὰρ οὖν πρόπει,  
 Τροίαν κατασκάψαντα τοῦ δικηφόρου  
 Διὸς μακέλλη, τῇ κατείργασται πέδον.  
 τοιόνδε Τροίᾳ περιβαλὼν ζευκτήριον  
 ἀναξ Ἀτρείδης πρέσβυς εὐδαίμων ἀνὴρ 290  
 ἦκει, τίεσθαι δ' ἀξιότατος βροτῶν.

Χο. κῆρυξ Ἀχαιῶν χαίρε τῶν ἀπὸ στρατοῦ.

Κη. χαίρω. τεθναίην. οὐκέτ' ἀντερῶ θεοῖς.

Χο. ἔρωσ πατρώας τῆσδε γῆς σ' ἐγύμνασεν.

Κη. ὥστ' ἐνδακρῦειν γ' ὄμμασιν χαρᾶς ὑπο. 295

*Ch.* Sweet then was the disease with which you languished.

*Her.* How so? Not yet do I understand your words.

*Ch.* Not unreturned was this thy yearning love.

*Her.* Our country pined then for its pining host?

*Ch.* Full oft with desolate heart we sighed for you.

*Her.* Whence came this gloom, clouding the host's return?

*Ch.* Silence I have long used, as harm's best cure.

*Her.* How so? The kings being gone, didst thou fear  
someone?

*Ch.* As thou didst say but now, 'twere joy to die.

*Her.* Because the event is well: though in all those years

Much may we reckon prosperously sped,

And much deplorably. Who save a God

May abide scathless everlastingly?

Were I to cite our hardships and ill-lodgings,

Comfortless berths on narrow decks—and what

Did we not lack by day, poor groaning wretches?

And then on land—there it was worse distress,

Bivouacked close beneath the enemy's walls:

Down from the sky, and from the fenny ground

Rained drizzling dews, a never-ceasing plague,

Making our hairy garments full of vermin.

Or should I tell of that bird-killing cold,

Unbearable winter gusts from Ida's snows,

Or of the heat, when in his noontide couch

Windless and waveless the sea sank to rest—

But what need to complain? Past is that misery.

Past is it for the dead, that nevermore

Will they take trouble even to rise again.

For us, the relics of the Argive host,

The gain prevails, the injury is outweighed.

*Ch.* Cheerfully I accept defeat in argument.

Χο. *τερπνῆς ἄρ' ἦτε τῆσδ' ἐπήβολοι νόσου.*

Κη. *πῶς δῆ; διδαχθεῖς τοῦδε δεσπόσω λόγου.*

Χο. *τῶν ἀντερώντων ἰμέρφ πεπληγμένοι.*

Κη. *ποθεῖν ποθοῦντα τήνδε γῆν στρατὸν λέγεις.*

Χο. *ὡς πόλλ' ἀμαυρᾶς ἐκ φρενός μ' ἀναστένειν.* 300

Κη. *πόθεν τὸ δύσφρον τοῦτ' ἐπήν, στύγος στρατῶ;*

Χο. *πάλαι τὸ συγᾶν φάρμακον βλάβης ἔχω.*

Κη. *καὶ πῶς; ἀπόντων κοιράνων ἔτρεις τινάς;*

Χο. *ὡς νῦν, τὸ σὸν δῆ, καὶ θανεῖν πολλὴ χάρις.*

Κη. *εὖ γὰρ πέπρακται. ταῦτα δ' ἐν πολλῶ χρόνῳ* 305

*τὰ μὲν τις ἂν λέξειεν εὐπετῶς ἔχειν,*

*τὰ δ' αὐτε καπίμομφα. τίς δὲ πλὴν θεῶν*

*ἅπαντ' ἀπήμων τὸν δι' αἰῶνος χρόνον;*

*μόχθους γὰρ εἰ λέγοιμι καὶ δυσανλίας*

*σπαρνὰς παρείξεις καὶ κακοστρώτους, τί δ' οὐ* 310

*στένοντες οὐ λαχόντες ἡματος μέρος;*

*τὰ δ' αὐτε χέρσῳ καὶ προσῆν πλέον στύγος·*

*εὐναὶ γὰρ ἦσαν δαῖτων πρὸς τείχεσιν.*

*ἐξ οὐρανοῦ δὲ καπὸ γῆς λειμώνια*

*δρόσοι κατεψάκαζον, ἔμπεδον σίνος,* 315

*ἐσθημάτων τιθέντες ἔνθηρον τρίχα.*

*χειμῶνα δ' εἰ λέγοι τις οἰωνοκτόνον,*

*οἶον παρείχ' ἄφερτον Ἰδαία χιῶν,*

*ἢ θάλπος, εὔτε πόντος ἐν μεσημβριναῖς*

*κοίταις ἀκύμων νηνέμοις εὐδοὶ πεσῶν—* 320

*τί ταῦτα πενθεῖν δεῖ; παροίχεται πόνος·*

*παροίχεται δέ, τοῖσι μὲν τεθνηκόσιν*

*τὸ μήποτ' αὖθις μηδ' ἀναστῆναι μέλειν.*

*ἡμῖν δὲ τοῖς λοιποῖσιν Ἀργείων στρατοῦ*

*νικᾶ τὸ κέρδος, πῆμα δ' οὐκ ἀντιρρέπει.* 325

Χο. *νικῶμενος λόγοισιν οὐκ ἀναίνομαι·*

Old age is always young enough to learn.  
 But the house and Clytaemnestra this news most  
 Should interest, and make me too rich in joy.

*Cl.* I lifted up a jubilant cry long since,  
 When first by night came that fire-messenger  
 Telling of Ilium's capture and destruction.  
 But thou, why tell the full tale now to me?  
 Soon from the king's self shall I learn it all.  
 Rather, that I may best make speed to welcome  
 My revered husband to his home, (for what  
 More sweet to a wife's eyes than that day's light,  
 When to her spouse, whom heaven has saved from war,  
 She unbars the gate?) this to my lord declare:  
 Let him speed hither to meet his people's love;  
 And at home may he find a faithful wife,  
 Even such as he left her, a house-dog kind  
 To him she loves, to ill-wishers a foe,  
 And in all else unchanged, ne'er having yet  
 Broken one seal in all that length of time.  
 No more of dalliance, (no, nor of scandal's breath,)  
 With another man do I know, than of dipping bronze.

[*Exit.*]

*Her.* Big is the boast, though weighted well with truth,  
 Scarce seemly for a noble wife to utter.

*Ch.* Thus to thine understanding hath she spoken,  
 Most—speciously—to shrewd interpreters.

[*A triumphal march. Enter* AGAMEMNON,  
 KASSANDRA, *etc.*]

Come now, O king, despoiler of Troy,  
 Offspring of Atreus!  
 How shall I hail thee? How pay thee homage,

- αἰὲν γὰρ ἠβῆα τοῖς γέρουσιν εὐμαθεῖν.  
 δόμοις δὲ ταῦτα καὶ Κλυταιμῆστρα μέλειν  
 εἰκὸς μάλιστα, σὺν δὲ πλουτίζειν ἐμέ.
- Κλ. ἀνωλόλυξα μὲν πάλαι χαρᾶς ὕπο, 330  
 ὅτ' ἦλθ' ὁ πρῶτος νύχιος ἄγγελος πυρός,  
 φράζων ἄλωσιν Ἰλίου τ' ἀνάστασιν.  
 καὶ νῦν τὰ μάσσω μὲν τί δεῖ σέ μοι λέγειν ;  
 ἄνακτος αὐτοῦ πάντα πεύσομαι λόγον.  
 ὅπως δ' ἄριστα τὸν ἐμὸν αἰδοῖον πόσιν 335  
 σπεύσω πάλιν μολόντα δέξασθαι—τί γὰρ  
 γυναικὶ τούτου φέγγος ἦδιον δρακεῖν,  
 ἀπὸ στρατείας ἀνδρὶ σῶσαντος θεοῦ  
 πύλας ἀνοίξαι;—ταῦτ' ἀπάγγελιλον πόσει·  
 ἦκειν ὅπως τάχιστ' ἐράσμιον πόλει· 340  
 γυναῖκα πιστὴν δ' ἐν δόμοις εὖροι μολῶν  
 οἶανπερ οὖν ἔλειπε, δωμάτων κύνα  
 ἐσθλὴν ἐκείνῳ, πολεμίαν τοῖς δύσφροσιν,  
 καὶ τᾶλλ' ὁμοίαν πάντα, σημαντήριον  
 οὐδὲν διαφθείρασαν ἐν μήκει χρόνου. 345  
 οὐδ' οἶδα τέρψιν οὐδ' ἐπίψογον φάτιν  
 ἄλλου πρὸς ἀνδρὸς μᾶλλον ἢ χαλκοῦ βαφάς.

[Exit.]

- Κη. τοιόσδ' ὁ κόμπος τῆς ἀληθείας γέμων  
 οὐκ αἰσχρὸς ὡς γυναικὶ γενναίᾳ λακεῖν.
- Χο. αὕτη μὲν οὕτως εἶπε μανθάνοντί σοι 350  
 τοροῖσιν ἐρμηνεύσιν εὐπρεπῶς λόγον.

[A triumphal march. Enter AGAMEMNON,  
 KASSANDRA, etc.]

ἄγε δὴ, βασιλεῦ, Τροίας πτολίπορθ',  
 Ἄτρεως γένεθλον,  
 πῶς σε προσείπω; πῶς σε σεβίζω

Neither o'ershooting, nor yet scanting  
Due gratulation?  
For most men practising outward shows  
Hide thoughts perverse and unrighteous.  
Sighs prompt and apt for another's mischance  
Each hath in plenty; yet ne'er doth an unfeigned  
Sting of anguish pierce to the heart-strings:  
And copying the looks of those that rejoice  
They compel their lips to a counterfeit smile.  
Yet should the wisely discerning shepherd  
Ne'er be deceived by the eyes of fawners,  
That dissembling a loyal and cordial love  
Flatter him with watery affection.  
And of old when thou wast levying war  
For Helen's sake, then, I deny not,  
Graceless indeed was the image I formed of thee;  
Ill-steered did thy wits seem thus to be spending  
The life-blood of heroes  
To redeem a consenting adulteress.  
But now we greet thee with heart-deep love.  
Happy endings make happy labours.

[*Enter* CLYTAEMNESTRA.]

Thou by inquisition ere long shalt learn  
Whose stewardship of thy state is now  
Proved faithful, and whose unfaithful.

AGAMEMNON

First to Argos and her native Gods my prayers  
Are due, since they have aided my return,  
And the Justice I have wreaked upon the town  
Of Priam. For the Gods, when they had heard  
Our voiceless plea, into the vase of blood



μήθ' ὑπεράρας μήθ' ὑποκάμψας  
 355  
 καιρὸν χάριτος ;  
 πολλοὶ δὲ βροτῶν τὸ δοκεῖν εἶναι  
 προτίουσι δίκην παραβάντες.  
 τῷ δυσπραγοῦντι δ' ἐπιστενάχειν  
 πᾶς τις ἔτοιμος· δῆγμα δὲ λύπης  
 360  
 οὐδὲν ἐφ' ἧπαρ προσικνεῖται·  
 καὶ ξυγχαίρουσιν ὁμοιοπρεπεῖς  
 ἀγέλαστα πρόσωπα βιαζόμενοι.  
 ὅστις δ' ἀγαθὸς προβατογνώμων,  
 οὐκ ἔστι λαθεῖν ὄμματα φωτός,  
 365  
 τὰ δοκοῦντ' εὐφρονος ἐκ διανοίας  
 ὕδαρεῖ σαίνειν φιλότητι.  
 σὺ δέ μοι τότε μὲν στέλλων στρατιὰν  
 Ἑλένης ἔνεκ', οὐκ ἐπικεύσω,  
 κάρτ' ἀπομούσως ἦσθα γεγραμμένος,  
 370  
 οὐδ' εὖ πραπίδων οἶακα νέμων  
 θάρσος ἐκούσιον  
 ἀνδράσι θνήσκουσι κομίζων.  
 νῦν δ' οὐκ ἀπ' ἄκρας φρενὸς οὐδ' ἀφίλων  
 εὐφρων πόνος εὖ τελέσασιν.  
 375

[Enter CLYTAEMNESTRA.]

γνώσει δὲ χρόνῳ διαπευθόμενος  
 τὸν τε δικαίως καὶ τὸν ἀκαίρως  
 πόλιν οἰκουροῦντα πολιτῶν.

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ

πρῶτον μὲν Ἄργος καὶ θεοὺς ἐγχωρίους  
 380  
 δίκη προσειπεῖν, τοὺς ἔμοι μεταίτιους  
 νόστου δικαίων θ' ὦν ἐπραξάμην πόλιν  
 Πριάμου· δίκας γὰρ οὐκ ἀπὸ γλώσσης θεοὶ  
 κλύοντες ἀνδροκμήτας Ἰλίου φθορὰς

For Ilium's overthrowing cast their votes  
With one consent; while to the opposite urn  
Hope of the hand came nigh, yet filled it not.  
Her smoke still witnesseth the city's fall.  
The coils of doom yet live, and dying with them  
The ashes pant forth opulent breaths of richness.  
For this a memorable return we now  
Must pay the Gods, since we have woven high  
Our wrathful toils, and for one woman stolen  
A town has been laid low by the Argive monster,  
The horse's brood, the grim shield-bearing folk,  
Rousing to spring what time the Pleiads set.  
Yea leaping o'er the wall like a fleshed lion  
It lapped its fill of proud and princely blood.  
This ample prelude to the Gods is due.  
Now for thy hinting—I heard and bear in mind.  
I say the same, and share in thy suspicions.  
I speak with knowledge, having throughly learned  
How friendship is a mirror, a shadow's ghost,  
The hypocrite's pretence to wish me well.  
But where we find need of medicinal cure,  
By wise use of the knife or cautery  
We will endeavour to expel disease.  
Now to my palace and domestic hearth  
I pass within, there first to greet the Gods,  
Who sent me forth and thus have brought me home.  
May victory still bide with me to the end.

*Cl.* Townsmen of Argos, reverend counsellors,  
I blush not to confess to you my love  
And woman's fondness. As years pass, timidity  
Wanes in us all. No witness but my own  
I need to tell what grievous life was mine

- εἰς αἵματηρὸν τεύχος οὐ διχορρόπως  
 ψήφους ἔθεντο· τῷ δ' ἐναντίῳ κύτει 385  
 ἐλπίς προσήει χειρὸς οὐ πληρουμένῳ.  
 καπνῷ δ' ἀλοῦσα νῦν ἔτ' εὖσημος πόλις.  
 ἄτης θύελλαι ζῶσι· συνθνήσκουσα δὲ  
 σποδὸς προπέμπει πίονας πλούτου πνοάς.  
 τούτων θεοῖσι χρῆ πολύμνηστον χάριν 390  
 τίνειν, ἐπεὶπερ καὶ πάγας ὑπερκότους  
 ἐφραξάμεσθα καὶ γυναικὸς οὐνεκα  
 πόλιν διημάθυνεν Ἀργεῖον δάκος,  
 ἵππου νεοσσός, ἀσπιδοστροφὸς λεώς,  
 πήδημ' ὀρούσας ἀμφὶ Πλειάδων δύσιν· 395  
 ὑπερθορῶν δὲ πύργον ὤμησθης λέων  
 ἄδην ἔλειξεν αἵματος τυραννικοῦ.  
 θεοῖς μὲν ἐξέτεινα φροῖμιον τόδε·  
 τὰ δ' ἐς τὸ σὸν φρόνημα, μέμνημαι κλύων,  
 καὶ φημὶ ταυτὰ καὶ συνήγορόν μ' ἔχεις. 400  
 εἰδὼς λέγοιμ' ἄν, εὖ γὰρ ἐξεπίσταμαι,  
 ὀμιλίας κάτοπτρον, εἶδωλον σκιᾶς,  
 δοκοῦντας εἶναι κάρτα πρευμενεῖς ἐμοί.  
 ὅτῳ δὲ καὶ δεῖ φαρμάκων παιωνίων,  
 ἦτοι κέαντες ἢ τεμόντες εὐφρόνως 405  
 πειρασόμεσθα πῆματος τρέψαι νόσον.  
 νῦν δ' ἐς μέλαθρα καὶ δόμους ἐφεστίους  
 ἐλθὼν θεοῖσι πρῶτα δεξιῶσομαι,  
 οἵπερ πρόσω πέμψαντες ἠγαγον πάλιν.  
 νίκη δ' ἐπεὶπερ ἔσπετ', ἐμπέδως μένοι. 410
- Κλ.** ἄνδρες πολῖται, πρέσβος Ἀργείων τόδε,  
 οὐκ αἰσχυνοῦμαι τοὺς φιλόνορας τρόπους  
 λέξαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς· ἐν χρόνῳ δ' ἀποφθίνει  
 τὸ τάρβος ἀνθρώποισιν. οὐκ ἄλλων πάρα  
 μαθοῦσ', ἐμαυτῆς δύσφορον λέξω βίον 415

All that long while my lord lay beneath Ilium.  
First for a woman 'tis a woeful trial  
To sit at home forlorn, her husband far,  
Her ears filled ever with persistent tales,  
One close upon the other's heels with news  
Each of some worse disaster than the last.  
And as for wounds, if my lord had received  
As many as rumour deluged us withal,  
No net had been more full of holes than he.  
And had he died oft as report declared,  
A second Geryon with triple body  
A threefold vest of earth he might have boasted,  
Dying once for each several shape anew.  
By reason of such persistent rumours, oft  
Have others loosened from my neck perforce  
The hanging noose, foiling my fond desire.  
Hence too the boy Orestes, the true bond  
Of confidence between us, stands not here  
Beside me, as he should. Nor think it strange.  
He is in safe keeping with our good ally,  
Strophius the Phocian, who has warned me oft  
Of double mischief, thine own peril first  
Before Troy, and the fear lest turbulent anarchy  
Might risk some plot against us, as men's wont  
Is to spurn him the more who has been cast down.  
Such were my reasons, honest and without guile.  
But as for me, the fountains of my tears  
Have run themselves quite dry. No drop is left.  
And my late-watching eyes have suffered hurt  
Weeping thy nightly pomp of torch-bearers  
Neglected ever. And the wailing gnat  
With faintest pulse of wing would startle me

τοσόνδ' ὅσονπερ οὔτος ἦν ὑπ' Ἴλίῳ.  
 τὸ μὲν γυναῖκα πρῶτον ἄρσενος δίχα  
 ἦσθαι δόμοις ἔρημον ἔκπαυλον κακόν,  
 πολλὰς κλύουσαν κληδόνας παλιγκότους·  
 καὶ τὸν μὲν ἤκειν, τὸν δ' ἐπесφέρειν κακοῦ 420  
 κάκιον ἄλλο πῆμα, λάσκοντας δόμοις.  
 καὶ τραυμάτων μὲν εἰ τόσων ἐτύγγαυεν  
 ἀνὴρ ὄδ', ὡς πρὸς οἶκον ὠχετεύετο  
 φάτις, τέτρηται δικτύου πλέον λέγειν.  
 εἰ δ' ἦν τεθνηκώς, ὡς ἐπλήθουον λόγοι, 425  
 τρισώματός τ' ἂν Γηρυὼν ὁ δεύτερος  
 χθονὸς τρίμοιρον χλαῖναν ἐξηύχει λαβεῖν,  
 ἅπαξ ἐκάστῳ κατθανῶν μορφώματι.  
 τοιῶνδ' ἕκατι κληδόνων παλιγκότων  
 πολλὰς ἄνωθεν ἀρτάνας ἐμῆς δέρης 430  
 ἔλυσαν ἄλλοι πρὸς βίαν λελιμμένης.  
 ἐκ τῶνδέ τοι παῖς ἐνθάδ' οὐ παραστατεῖ,  
 ἐμῶν τε καὶ σῶν κύριος πιστωμάτων,  
 ὡς χρῆν, Ὀρέστης· μηδὲ θαυμάσης τόδε.  
 τρέφει γὰρ αὐτὸν εὐμενῆς δορυξενος 435  
 Στρόφιος ὁ Φωκεύς, ἀμφίλεκτα πῆματα  
 ἐμοὶ προφωνῶν, τὸν θ' ὑπ' Ἴλίῳ σέθεν  
 κίνδυνον, εἴ τε δημόθρους ἀναρχία  
 βουλήν καταρράψειεν, ὥστε σύγγουον  
 βροτοῖσι τὸν πεσόντα λακτίσαι πλέον. 440  
 τοιάδε μέντοι σκῆψις οὐ δόλον φέρει.  
 ἔμοιγε μὲν δὴ κλαυμάτων ἐπίσσυτοι  
 πηγαὶ κατεσβήκασιν, οὐδ' ἔνι σταγῶν.  
 ἐν ὀψικοίτοις δ' ὄμμασιν βλάβας ἔχω  
 τὰς ἀμφί σοι κλαίουσα λαμπτηρουχίας 445  
 ἀτημελήτους αἰέν. ἐν δ' ὀνειράσιν  
 λεπταῖς ὑπαὶ κώνωπος ἐξηγειρόμη

From dreams wherein I saw thee pass through more  
 Than could befall within the time I slept.  
 Now after all these trials, with heart unpined,  
 I hail my husband watch-dog of the fold,  
 The ship's securing stay, the lofty roof's  
 Firm-grounded pillar, the father's sole-born child,  
 Or as land espied by seamen beyond hope,  
 Daylight as it looks fairest after storm,  
 A fresh spring to the thirsty wayfarer.  
 Such are the terms I choose to praise him fitly.  
 Let envy keep afar, since woes in plenty  
 We endured before. Now, most dear lord, descend  
 From yonder car; but set not upon earth  
 That foot, O king, wherewith thou hast trampled Troy.  
 Women, delay not. Know ye not your task?  
 Strew ye the path he treads with tapestries.  
 Straight let his way be carpeted with purple,  
 That Justice lead him to a home scarce hoped for.  
 For the rest a never-slumbering vigilance  
 Shall order justly as fate, I trust, intends.

*Ag.* Offspring of Leda, guardian of my home,  
 Lengthily, to the measure of my absence,  
 Hast thou stretched out thy speech: but seemly praise,  
 That tribute should proceed from other lips.  
 Moreover shame not *me* with womanish fopperies,  
 Nor grovel before *me* with loud-mouthed clamour,  
 As though I were some oriental king;  
 Nor with strown garments make my steps the gaze  
 Of envy. To the Gods such pomp belongs.  
 To tread, a mortal, over brodered fineries,  
 That to my conscience were a thing of fear.  
 As man, not God, I bid you reverence me.

ῥιπαῖσι θύσσοντος, ἀμφί σοι πάθη  
 ὀρώσα πλείω τοῦ ξυνεύδοντος χρόνου.  
 νῦν ταῦτα πάντα τλᾶσ' ἀπενθήτω φρενὶ 450  
 λέγοιμ' ἂν ἄνδρα τόνδε τῶν σταθμῶν κύνα,  
 σωτήρα ναὸς πρότονου, ὑψηλῆς στέγης  
 στῦλον ποδήρη, μονογενῆς τέκνον πατρί,  
 καὶ γῆν φανείσαν ναυτίλοις παρ' ἐλπίδα,  
 κάλλιστον ἡμᾶρ εἰσιδεῖν ἐκ χεΐματος, 455  
 ὄδοιπόρῳ διψῶντι πηγαῖον ῥέος.  
 τοιοῖσδέ τοί νιν ἀξιῶ προσφθέγμασιν.  
 φθόνος δ' ἀπέστω· πολλὰ γὰρ τὰ πρὶν κακὰ  
 ἠνευχόμεσθα. νῦν δέ μοι, φίλον κᾶρα,  
 ἔκβαιν' ἀπήνης τῆσδε, μὴ χαμαὶ τιθεῖς 460  
 τὸν σὸν πόδ', ὦναξ, Ἴλίου πορθήτορα.  
 δμωαί, τί μέλλεθ', αἷς ἐπέσταλται τέλος  
 πέδον κελεύθου στρωννύναι πετάσμασιν;  
 εὐθύς γενέσθω πορφυρόστρωτος πόρος  
 ἐς δῶμ' ἄελπτον ὡς ἂν ἠγήται δίκη. 465  
 τὰ δ' ἄλλα φροντὶς οὐχ ὑπνω νικωμένη  
 θήσει δικαίως σὺν θεοῖς εἰμαρμένα.

Αγ. Λήδας γένεθλον, δωμάτων ἐμῶν φύλαξ,  
 ἀπουσία μὲν εἶπας εἰκότως ἐμῇ·  
 μακρὰν γὰρ ἐξέτεινας· ἀλλ' ἐναισίμως 470  
 αἰνεῖν, παρ' ἄλλων χρὴ τόδ' ἔρχεσθαι γέρας·  
 καὶ τᾶλλα μὴ γυναικὸς ἐν τρόποις ἐμῇ  
 ἄβρυνε, μηδὲ βαρβάρου φωτὸς δίκην  
 χαμαιπετὲς βόαμα προσχάνης ἐμοί,  
 μηδ' εἵμασι στρώσασ' ἐπίφθονον πόρον 475  
 τίθει· θεοὺς τοι τοῖσδε τιμαλφεῖν χρεῶν·  
 ἐν ποικίλοις δὲ θνητὸν ὄντα κάλλεσιν  
 βαίνειν ἐμοὶ μὲν οὐδαμῶς ἄνευ φόβου.  
 λέγω κατ' ἄνδρα, μὴ θεόν, σέβειν ἐμέ.

No need of foot-cloths and embroideries:

Fame's voice rings loud enough. Heaven's greatest  
Is a sane mind. Happy let him be called [gift  
Whose life has ended in felicity.

Acting in all things thus, naught need I fear.

*Cl.* Come now, if judgment sanction, tell me this—

*Ag.* My judgment, be assured, I shall not change.

*Cl.* Would you in peril's hour have vowed this ritual?

*Ag.* Yes, had advised authority prescribed it.

*Cl.* What think you Priam had done, were his this  
triumph?

*Ag.* On broidered robes he doubtless would have trod.

*Cl.* Then let not human censure make thee ashamed.

*Ag.* Yet mighty is the people's murmuring voice.

*Cl.* Who stirs no jealousy, neither is he envied.

*Ag.* 'Tis not a woman's part to thirst for strife.

*Cl.* The fortunate may yield victory with grace.

*Ag.* Dost thou too deem this victory worth a contest?

*Cl.* Yield; victor still, since vanquished willingly.

*Ag.* Well, if it please thee, quick, let one unloose  
My shoes, these insolent slaves beneath my feet;

Lest, as with these I walk the sacred purples,  
Some evil glance should strike me from afar.

'Tis shame enough to waste our wealth by trampling  
And spoiling silver-purchased tapestries.

Of that enough. This stranger damsel now

Receive with kindness. A gentle master wins

Approving glances from God's distant eye.

And she, the chosen flower of our rich spoil,

The army's gift, hath followed in my train.

Since then I am reduced herein to obey thee,

To the palace will I go trampling on purples.



χωρίς ποδοψήστρων τε καὶ τῶν ποικίλων 480  
 κληδῶν ἀντεῖ· καὶ τὸ μὴ κακῶς φρονεῖν  
 θεοῦ μέγιστον δῶρον. ὀλβίσαι δὲ χρῆ  
 βίον τελευτήσαντ' ἐν εὐεστοῖ φίλῃ.  
 εἶπον τὰδ' ὡς πράσσοιμ' ἂν εὐθαρσῆς ἐγώ.

Κλ. καὶ μὴν τόδ' εἶπέ μὴ παρὰ γνώμην ἐμοί. 485

Αγ. γνώμην μὲν ἴσθι μὴ διαφθεροῦντ' ἐμέ.

Κλ. ἠϋξω θεοῖς δείσας ἂν ᾧδ' ἔρδειν τάδε;

Αγ. εἶπερ τις, εἰδῶς γ' εὖ, τόδ' ἐξείπεν τέλος.

Κλ. τί δ' ἂν δοκεῖ σοι Πρίαμος, εἰ τὰδ' ἤνυσεν;

Αγ. ἐν ποικίλοις ἂν κάρτα μοι βῆναι δοκεῖ. 490

Κλ. μὴ νυν τὸν ἀνθρώπειον αἰδεσθῆς ψόγον.

Αγ. φήμη γε μέντοι δημόθρους μέγα σθένει.

Κλ. ὁ δ' ἀφθόνητός γ' οὐκ ἐπίζηλος πέλει.

Αγ. οὔτοι γυναικός ἐστιν ἰμείρειν μάχης.

Κλ. τοῖς δ' ὀλβίοις γε καὶ τὸ νικᾶσθαι πρέπει. 495

Αγ. ἦ καὶ σὺ νίκην τήνδε δῆριος τίεις;

Κλ. πιθοῦ· κρατεῖς μέντοι παρεῖς γ' ἐκὼν ἐμοί.

Αγ. ἀλλ' εἰ δοκεῖ σοι ταῦθ', ὑπαί τις ἀρβύλας  
 λύοι τάχος, πρόδουλον ἔμβασιν ποδός,  
 σὺν ταῖσδέ μ' ἔμβαίνουθ' ἀλουργέσιν θεῶν 500  
 μὴ τις πρόσωθεν ὄμματος βάλοι φθόνος.

πολλὴ γὰρ αἰδὼς δωματοφθορεῖν ποσὶν  
 φθείροντα πλοῦτον ἀργυρωνήτους θ' ὑφάς.  
 τούτων μὲν οὔτω· τὴν ξένην δὲ πρευμενῶς  
 τήνδ' ἐσκόμιζε· τὸν κρατοῦντα μαλθακῶς 505  
 θεὸς πρόσωθεν εὐμενῶς προσδέρκεται.

αὕτη δὲ πολλῶν χρημάτων ἐξαίρετον  
 ἄνθος, στρατοῦ δώρημ', ἐμοὶ ξυνέσπετο.  
 ἐπεὶ δ' ἀκούειν σοῦ κατέστραμμαι τάδε,  
 εἴμ' ἐς δόμων μέλαθρα πορφύρας πατῶν. 510

*Cl.* There is the sea, (and who shall drain it dry?)  
 Breeding abundant purple, costly as silver,  
 Forever oozing fresh to dip robes in.  
 And of such, Heaven be thanked, good store, my king,  
 Is ours. This house knows naught of penury.  
 Full many a robe for trampling had I vowed,  
 Had the oracles enjoined it, when I sought  
 Some means to ransom home so dear a life.  
 Thou art the living root whence springs the foliage  
 That screens our house against the dog-star's glare.  
 So thou returning to thy home and hearth  
 Betokenest warmth in winter's midst returned.  
 And when Zeus from the unripe grape's virginity  
 Matures wine, then like coolness in the house  
 Is the advent of the crowned and perfect lord.

[*As AGAMEMNON goes in.*]

Zeus, Zeus, who crownest all, crown now my prayers!  
 Thereafter as thou wilt mayst thou dispose.

[*CLYTAEMNESTRA follows AGAMEMNON, but  
 immediately returns.*]

*Cl.* Thou too, get thee within, Cassandra, thou.  
*Ch.* To thee she speaks, plain words, and pauses for thee.  
 Snared as thou art within the toils of fate,  
 If so thou canst, yield; or perchance thou canst not.  
*Cl.* Nay, unless her speech be like a twittering swallow's,  
 Some barbarous, unintelligible tongue,  
 She will understand my reasoning and obey.  
*Ch.* Go with her. As things stand, she counsels best.  
*Cl.* I have no leisure to stand trifling here  
 Outside, when round the central hearth already

- Κλ. ἔστιν θάλασσα, τίς δέ νιν κατασβέσει;  
 τρέφουσα πολλῆς πορφύρας ἰσάργυρον  
 κηκίδα παγκαίνιστον, εἰμάτων βαφάς.  
 οἶκος δ' ὑπάρχει τῶνδε σὺν θεοῖς, ἄναξ,  
 ἔχειν· πένεσθαι δ' οὐκ ἐπίσταται δόμος. 515  
 πολλῶν πατησμὸν δ' εἰμάτων ἂν ηὔξάμην,  
 δόμοισι προυνεχθέντος ἐν χρηστηρίοις,  
 ψυχῆς κόμιστρα τῆσδε μηχανωμένη.  
 ῥίξης γὰρ οὔσης φυλλὰς ἴκετ' ἐς δόμους,  
 σκιὰν ὑπερτίνασα σειρίου κυνός. 520  
 καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἐστίαν,  
 θάλπος μὲν ἐν χειμῶνι σημαίνεις μολῶν·  
 ὅταν δὲ τεύχη Ζεὺς ἀπ' ὄμφακος πικρᾶς  
 οἴνου, τότ' ἤδη ψῦχος ἐν δόμοις πέλει,  
 ἀνδρὸς τελείου δῶμ' ἐπιστρωφωμένου. 525

[As AGAMEMNON goes in.]

Ζεῦ Ζεῦ τέλειε, τὰς ἐμὰς εὐχὰς τέλει·  
 μέλοι δέ τοι σοὶ τῶνπερ ἂν μέλλῃς τελεῖν.

[CLYTEMNESTRA follows AGAMEMNON, but  
 immediately returns.]

- Κλ. εἶσω κομίζου καὶ σύ, Κασάνδραν λέγω.  
 Χο. σοὶ τοι λέγουσα παύεται σαφῆ λόγον.  
 ἐντὸς δ' ἀλοῦσα μορσίμων ἀγρευμάτων 530  
 πείθοι' ἄν, εἰ πείθοι'· ἀπειθοίης δ' ἴσως.  
 Κλ. ἀλλ' εἶπερ ἐστὶ μὴ χελιδόνος δίκην  
 ἀγνώτα φωνὴν βάρβαρον κεκτημένη,  
 ἔσω φρενῶν λέγουσα πείθω νιν λόγῳ.  
 Χο. ἔπου. τὰ λῶστα τῶν παρεστῶτων λέγει. 535  
 Κλ. οὔτοι θυραία τῆδ' ἐμοὶ σχολὴ πάρα  
 τρίβειν· τὰ μὲν γὰρ ἐστίας μεσομφάλου

The victims wait the sacrifice of fire.  
No more will I waste words to be so served.

[*Exit* CLYTAEMNESTRA.]

*Ch.* And I, for I feel pity, will not chide.

KASSANDRA

Otototoi O Earth! Earth!

O Apollo! O Apollo!

*Ch.* Why upon Loxias callest thou thus woefully?  
He is not one who needeth dirgelike litanies.

*Ka.* Otototoi O Earth! Earth!

O Apollo! O Apollo!

*Ch.* Once more with ill-omened cries she calls that God  
Whose ears by lamentations are profaned.

*Ka.* Apollo! Apollo!

God of Ways, Apollo indeed to me!

For me thou hast this second time in truth destroyed.

*Ch.* Of her own woes it seems that she will prophesy.  
Heaven still inspires her mind, a slave's though it be.

*Ka.* Apollo! Apollo!

God of Ways, Apollo indeed to me!

Ah whither hast thou led me? yea, to what abode?

*Ch.* The Atreidae's palace. If thou knowest not that,  
Take my assurance: thou shalt not find it false.

*Ka.* Nay, 'tis abhorred of Heaven: much is it privy to,

Unnatural murders and butcheries,

A human shambles, sprinkled are the floors with blood.

*Ch.* Keen as a hound upon the scent she seems.

This trail shall lead her soon where murder lies.

*Ka.* There are the witnesses—there am I certified!

ἔσθηκεν ἤδη μῆλα πρὸς σφαγὰς πυρός.  
οὐ μὴν πλέω ρίψασ' ἀτιμασθήσομαι.

[Exit CLYTEMNESTRA.]

Χο. ἐγὼ δ', ἐποικτείρω γάρ, οὐ θυμώσομαι. 540

ΚΑΣΑΝΔΡΑ

ὄτοτοτοὶ πόποι δᾶ. [στρ. α.  
ὦπολλον ὦπολλον.

Χο. τί ταῦτ' ἀνωτότυξας ἀμφὶ Λοξίου;  
οὐ γὰρ τοιοῦτος ὥστε θρηνητοῦ τυχεῖν.

Κα. ὄτοτοτοὶ πόποι δᾶ. [ἀντ. α. 545  
ὦπολλον ὦπολλον.

Χο. ἢ δ' αὖτε δυσφημοῦσα τὸν θεὸν καλεῖ  
οὐδὲν προσήκουτ' ἐν γόοις παραστατεῖν.

Κα. "Απολλον" Απολλον [στρ. β.  
ἀγυιᾶτ' ἀπόλλων ἐμός. 550  
ἀπώλεσας γὰρ οὐ μόλις τὸ δεύτερον.

Χο. χρήσειν ἔοικεν ἀμφὶ τῶν αὐτῆς κακῶν.  
μένει τὸ θεῖον δουλίᾳ περ ἐν φρενί.

Κα. "Απολλον" Απολλον [ἀντ. β.  
ἀγυιᾶτ' ἀπόλλων ἐμός. 555  
ἂ ποὶ ποτ' ἠγαγές με; πρὸς ποίαν στέγην;

Χο. πρὸς τὴν Ἀτρείδων· εἰ σὺ μὴ τόδ' ἐννοεῖς,  
ἐγὼ λέγω σοι· καὶ τάδ' οὐκ ἔρεῖς ψύθη.

Κα. μισόθεον μὲν οὖν, πολλὰ συνίστορα [στρ. γ.  
αὐτοφόνα κακὰ καὶ ἄρταμα, 560  
ἀνδροσφαγεῖον καὶ πέδον ραντήριον.

Χο. ἔοικεν εὖρις ἢ ξένη κυνὸς δίκην  
εἶναι, ματεύει δ' ὦν ἀνευρήσει φόνον.

Κα. μαρτυρίοισι γὰρ τοῖσδ' ἐπιπέιθομαι· [ἀντ. γ.

Babes yonder bewailing their sacrifice!

Wailing their flesh by a father roasted and devoured!

*Ch.* We were acquainted with thy mantic fame:

But of these things we seek no prophet here.

*Ka.* Alas! Ye Gods! What is she purposing?

What is this new and monstrous deed,

This deed of woe she purposes within this house,

Beyond love's enduring,

Beyond cure? and aloof stands

Succouring strength afar.

*Ch.* I know not what these prophesyings mean.

The first I guessed: with them the whole city is loud.

*Ka.* Oh cruel, cruel! Verily wilt thou so?

Him who hath shared thy nuptial bed,

When thou hast laved and cleansed him—how shall

Apace, see, the deed nears! [I tell the end?

With a swift reach she shoots forth

Murderous hand upon hand.

*Ch.* Not yet do I understand. Dark riddles first,

Dim-visions oracles perplex me now.

*Ka.* Ey! Ey! Papai, papai!

What is this now I see?

Some net of death 'tis surely? [the crime

But she's the snare, who shared the bed, who shares

Of blood. Let Strife, ravening against the race,

Utter a jubilant cry

O'er the abhorred sacrifice.

*Ch.* What fiend is this thou bidst lift o'er the house

A cry of triumph? Thy words bring me no cheer.

Back to my heart the drops yellow and pale have run,

As when o'er the face of one fallen in fight

- κλαιόμενα τάδε βρέφη σφαγάς,  
 ὄπτας τε σάρκας πρὸς πατρὸς βεβρωμένας. 565
- Χο. ἦμεν κλέος σοῦ μαντικὸν πεπυσμένοι·  
 τούτων προφήτας δ' οὔτινας ματεύομεν.
- Κα. ἰὼ πόποι, τί ποτε μῆδεται; [στρ. δ.  
 τί τόδε νέον ἄχος μέγα 570  
 μέγ' ἐν δόμοισι τοῖσδε μῆδεται κακὸν  
 ἄφερτον φίλοισιν, δυσίατον; ἀλλὰ δ'  
 ἐκὰς ἀποστατεῖ.
- Χο. τούτων αἰδρίς εἰμι τῶν μαντευμάτων.  
 ἐκεῖνα δ' ἔγνω· πᾶσα γὰρ πόλις βοᾷ. 575
- Κα. ἰὼ τάλαινα, τόδε γὰρ τελεῖς, [ἀντ. δ.  
 τὸν ὀμοδέμνιον πόσιν  
 λουτροῖσι φαιδρύνασα—πῶς φράσω τέλος;  
 τάχος γὰρ τόδ' ἔσται· προτείνει δὲ χεῖρ' ἐκ  
 χερὸς ὀρεγμέναν. 580
- Χο. οὔπω ξυνῆκα· νῦν γὰρ ἐξ αἰνυγμάτων  
 ἐπαργέμοισι θεσφάτοις ἀμηχανῶ.
- Κα. ἔ ἔ, παπαῖ παπαῖ, τί τόδε φαίνεται; [στρ. ε.  
 ἦ δίκτυόν τί γ' Ἄιδου;  
 ἀλλ' ἄρκυς ἢ ξύνευνος, ἢ ξυναίτια 585  
 φόνου. στάσις δ' ἀκόρετος γένει  
 κατολολυξάτω θύματος λευσίμου.
- Χο. ποίαν Ἐρινὺν τήνδε δώμασιν κέλει  
 ἐπορθιάζειν; οὔ με φαιδρύνει λόγος.  
 ἐπὶ δὲ καρδίαν ἔδραμε κροκοβαφῆς 590  
 σταγῶν, ἅτε καὶ δορὶ πτωσίμοις

Pallor of death is spread  
 Timed with life's sinking rays;  
 And the end neareth swift.

*Ka.* Ah! Ah! Beware! Beware!  
 From his accursèd mate  
 Keep far the bull. In vestments  
 She entangles him, and with her black and crafty horn  
 Gores him. He falls into the cauldron's steam.  
 Treacherous murdering bath,  
 Thus thy dark story is told.

*Ch.* I cannot boast to be a skilful judge  
 Of oracles; but 'tis woe I spell from these.  
 When from a prophet's mouth ever to mortal ears  
 Have good tidings sped? 'Tis naught else but woe  
 Volubly chanted forth,  
 Teaching fear, fear alone,  
 In skilled monotone.

*Ka.* Alas, alas! What hapless sorrowful doom is mine!  
 For of my own sad fate, mingled with his, I tell.  
 Ah whither hast thou brought me now, the hapless  
 one? [else?  
 For naught save only to share death with thee? What

*Ch.* Frenzied and heaven-possessed, ever thine own  
 In wild, lawless strains [despair  
 Thou art uttering, even as doth heart-sore,  
 Never with wailing satiate,  
 Some brown nightingale.  
 Ityn, Ityn she sighs, mourning in anguish all  
 Her woe-plenished life.

*Ka.* Alas, alas! The doom of the musical nightingale!  
 For with a winged and soft-featherèd form the Gods



ξυνανύτει βίου δύντος αὐγαῖς. ταχεῖ-  
α δ' ἄτα πέλει.

- Κα. ἂ ἄ, ἰδοὺ ἰδοῦ· ἄπεχε τῆς βοῶς [ἀντ. ε.  
τὸν ταῦρον· ἐν πέπλοισι 595  
μελαγκέρῳ λαβοῦσα μηχανήματι  
τύπτει· πίτνει δ' ἐν ἐνύδρῳ κύτει.  
δολοφόνου λέβητος τύχαν σοι λέγω.
- Χο. οὐ κομπάσαιμ' ἂν θεσφάτων γνώμων ἄκρος 600  
εἶναι, κακῶ δέ τῳ προσεικάζω τάδε.  
ἀπὸ δὲ θεσφάτων τίς ἀγαθὰ φάτις  
βροτοῖς στέλλεται; κακῶν γὰρ διαὶ  
πολυεπεῖς τέχναι θεσπιῶδὸν φόβον  
φέρουσιν μαθεῖν.
- Κα. ἰὼ ἰὼ ταλαίνας κακόποτμοι τύχαι· [στρ. ζ.  
τὸ γὰρ ἐμὸν θροῶ πάθος ἐπεγχύδαν. 606  
ποῖ δὴ με δεῦρο τὴν τάλαιναν ἤγαγες;  
οὐδέν ποτ' εἰ μὴ ξυυθανουμένην. τί γάρ;
- Χο. φρενομανῆς τις εἶ θεοφόρητος, ἀμ-  
φὶ δ' αὐτᾶς θροεῖς 610  
νόμον ἄνομον, οἰά τις ξουθὰ  
ἀκόρετος βοᾶς, φεῦ, ταλαίλαις φρεσὶν  
Ἴτυν Ἴτυν στένουσ' ἀμφιθαλῆ κακοῖς  
ἀηδὼν βίον.
- Κα. ἰὼ ἰὼ λιγείας μόρον ἀηδόνας· [ἀντ. ζ.  
περίβαλόν γε οἱ πτεροφόρον δέμας 616

Arrayed her, a gentle suffering a tearless change.  
But me awaits the cleaving of a two-edged blade.

*Ch.* Agony fierce and vain, passionate mantic throes,  
Oh whènce hàst thou these,  
Such a terrible chant in wild harsh cries  
Fashioning forth, yet clear-voiced  
In loud rhythmic strains?  
What may it be that thus guides and inspires thy word  
On its ill-boding path?

*Ka.* Lo now my oracle no more through a veil  
Shall look forth dimly, like a bride new-wed;  
But clear and strong towards the rising sun  
Shall it come blowing, and before it roll  
Wave-like against the light a woe than this  
More huge. No longer in riddles will I monish you.  
This house is ever haunted by a quire  
Of hideous concord, for the song is foul.  
Lo, drunken with human blood till they wax bold  
And insolent, they abide within, a rout,  
Hard to expel, of revelling kindred fiends.  
They infest the chamber-doors chanting their chant  
Of that first sin: anon they execrate  
The abhorred defiler of a brother's bed.  
Say, have I missed, or was my shaft aimed home?  
Or am I a false seer, a prating vagabond?  
Bear witness with an oath that well I know  
The ancient tale of the sins of this house.

*Ch.* How should an oath, though ne'er so truly plighted,  
Bring remedy? But I much admire that thou,  
Though bred beyond the sea, shouldst speak as cer-  
tainly [there.  
Of a strange land as though thou hadst sojourned

- θεοὶ γλυκύν τ' ἀγῶνα κλαυμάτων ἄτερ·  
 ἐμοὶ δὲ μίμνει σχισμὸς ἀμφήκει δορί.
- Χο. πόθεν ἐπισσύτους θεοφόρους τ' ἔχεις  
 ματαίους δύας, 620  
 τὰ δ' ἐπίφοβα δυσφάτω κλαυγᾶ  
 μελοτυπεῖς ὁμοῦ τ' ὀρθίοις ἐν νόμοις;  
 πόθεν ὄρους ἔχεις θεσπεσίας ὁδοῦ  
 κακορρήμονας;
- Κα. καὶ μὴν ὁ χρησμὸς οὐκέτ' ἐκ καλυμμάτων 625  
 ἔσται δεδορκῶς νεογάμου νύμφης δίκην·  
 λαμπρὸς δ' ἔοικεν ἡλίου πρὸς ἀντολὰς  
 πνέων ἐσάξειν, ὥστε κύματος δίκην  
 κλύζειν πρὸς αὐγὰς τοῦδε πήματος πολλὴ  
 μείζον· φρενώσω δ' οὐκέτ' ἐξ αἰνιγμάτων. 630  
 τὴν γὰρ στέγην τήνδ' οὐποτ' ἐκλείπει χορὸς  
 σύμφθογγος οὐκ εὐφωνος· οὐ γὰρ εὖ λέγει.  
 καὶ μὴν πεπωκῶς γ', ὡς θρασύνεσθαι πλέον,  
 βρότειον αἶμα κῶμος ἐν δόμοις μένει,  
 δύσπεμπτος ἔξω, συγγόνων Ἐρινύων. 635  
 ὕμνοῦσι δ' ὕμνον δώμασιν προσήμεναι  
 πρῶταρχον ἄτην· ἐν μέρει δ' ἀπέπτυσαν  
 εὐνὰς ἀδελφοῦ τῷ πατοῦντι δυσμενεῖς.  
 ἤμαρτον, ἢ θηρῶ τι τοξότης τις ὥς;  
 ἢ ψευδόμαντις εἶμι θυροκόπος φλέδων; 640  
 ἐκμαρτύρησον προυμόσας τό μ' εἰδέναί  
 λόγῳ παλαιὰς τῶνδ' ἀμαρτίας δόμων.
- Χο. καὶ πῶς ἂν ὄρκος, πῆγμα γενναίως παγέν,  
 παιώνιος γένοιτο; θαυμάζω δέ σε -  
 πόντου πέραν τραφεῖσαν ἀλλόθρου πόλιν 645  
 κυρεῖν λέγουσαν, ὥσπερ εἰ παρεστάτεις.

*Ka.* The seer Apollo endowed me with this skill.

*Ch.* Smitten with love perchance, God though he be?

*Ka.* Hitherto shame forbade me to confess it.

*Ch.* Yes, we are all more delicate in prosperity.

*Ka.* Vehement and mighty was the love he breathed.

*Ch.* And in due course came you to child-bearing?

*Ka.* I gave consent, then kept not faith with Loxias.

*Ch.* Already wast thou possessed by power of prophecy?

*Ka.* Already Troy's whole agony I foretold.

*Ch.* How then! Couldst thou escape the wrath of Loxias?

*Ka.* None would believe my words: so was I punished.

*Ch.* Yet to us thy words seem worthy of belief.

*Ka.* Ioû! Ioû! Oh agony!

Again dire pangs of clear vision whirl

And rack my soul with awful preludings.

Behold them there, sitting before the house,

Young children, like to phantom shapes in dream!

Boys slain by their own kindred they appear.

Their hands are filled with flesh, yea 'tis their own.

The heart, the inward parts, see, they are holding,

(Oh piteous burden,) whereof their father tasted.

For this, I tell you, vengeance is devised

By a recreant lion who lurking in the bed

Keeps watch, ah me! for the returning lord;

My lord; for the slave's yoke I must endure.

The fleet's high captain, Ilium's ravager,

He knows not what the abhorred she-hound's tongue

After long-drawn fawning welcome—what accurst

Treacherous stroke she aims with deadly stealth.

O wickedness horrible! Of her lord the wife

- Κα. μάντις μ' Ἀπόλλων τῷδ' ἐπέστησεν τέλει.  
 Χο. μῶν καὶ θεός περ ἰμέρω πεπληγμένος;  
 Κα. προτοῦ μὲν αἰδῶς ἦν ἐμοὶ λέγειν τάδε.  
 Χο. ἀβρύνεται γὰρ πᾶς τις εὖ πράσσων πλέον. 650  
 Κα. ἀλλ' ἦν παλαιστῆς κάρτ' ἐμοὶ πνέων χάριν.  
 Χο. ἦ καὶ τέκνων εἰς ἔργον ἠλθέτην νόμῳ;  
 Κα. ξυναινέσασα Λοξίαν ἐψευσάμην.  
 Χο. ἤδη τέχναισιν ἐνθέοις ἤρημένῃ;  
 Κα. ἤδη πολίταις πάντ' ἐθέσπιζον πάθη. 655  
 Χο. πῶς δῆτ'; ἄνατος ἦσθα Λοξίου κότῳ;  
 Κα. ἔπειθον οὐδέν' οὐδέν, ὡς τάδ' ἤμπλακον.  
 Χο. ἡμῖν γε μὲν δὴ πιστὰ θεσπίζειν δοκεῖς.  
 Κα. ἰοὺ ἰοῦ, ᾧ ᾧ κακά.  
 ὑπ' αὖ με δεινὸς ὀρθομαντείας πόνος 660  
 στροβεῖ ταρασσῶν φροιμίοις δυσφροιμίοις.  
 ὀράτε τούσδε τοὺς δόμοις ἐφημένους  
 νέους, ὀνείρων προσφερεῖς μορφώμασι;  
 παῖδες θανόντες ὡσπερὶ πρὸς τῶν φίλων,  
 χεῖρας κρεῶν πλήθοντες οἰκειᾶς βορᾶς, 665  
 σὺν ἐντέροις τε σπλάγχν', ἐποίκτιστον γέμος,  
 πρέπουσ' ἔχοντες, ὧν πατὴρ ἐγεύσατο.  
 ἐκ τῶνδε ποινας φημι βουλευεῖν τινὰ  
 λέοντ' ἀναλκιν ἐν λέχει στρωφώμενον  
 οἰκουρόν, οἴμοι, τῷ μολόντι δεσπότη 670  
 ἐμῷ· φέρειν γὰρ χρὴ τὸ δούλιον ζυγόν·  
 νεῶν δ' ἔπαρχος Ἴλίου τ' ἀναστάτης  
 οὐκ οἶδεν οἷα γλῶσσα μισητῆς κυνὸς  
 λέξασα κάκτεινασα φαιδρόνους, δίκην  
 ἄτης λαθραίου, τεύξεται κακῇ τύχῃ. 675  
 τοιαῖδε τόλμη θῆλυς ἄρσενος φουεὺς

Is murderess. By what loathsome monster's name  
 Should I describe her fitly? An amphisbaena?  
 Or some cliff-lairing Scylla, bane of mariners,  
 A raging demon mother, breathing havoc  
 Against her dearest? And how she cried in triumph,  
 The all-shameless fiend, as when a battle breaks,  
 Feigning to glory in his safe return!  
 Herein though I gain no credence, 'tis all one.  
 What must be, shall be; and thou beholding soon  
 Shalt call me in pity a prophet all too true.

*Ch.* Thyestes' banquet of his own children's flesh  
 Shuddering I understood. Yea horror seized me  
 Hearing the true tale without fabling told.  
 But in all else I wander far astray.

*Ka.* Agamemnon's death I say thou shalt behold.

*Ch.* Peace, wretched woman! Hush thy ill-omened lips.

*Ka.* This word no Healing God can remedy.

*Ch.* Not if it must be so: but Heaven avert it!

*Ka.* While thou prayest, the slayers are making ready.

*Ch.* What man is the contriver of this woe?

*Ka.* Wide indeed of my warning must thou have looked.

*Ch.* For I perceive not how the deed is possible.

*Ka.* See now, I know the Greek tongue all too well.

*Ch.* So doth the Pythoness: yet her words are dark.

*Ka.* Papai! What is this fire! It surges upon me!

Ototoi! Lycean Apollo! Ay me, me!

Yonder two-footed lioness, who shares

The wolf's couch, while the noble lion is far,

Shall slay me, hapless woman. A vengeful charm

' She is brewing, and therein will mix *my* recompense.

ἔστιν. τί νιν καλοῦσα δυσφιλὲς δάκος  
 τύχοιμ' ἄν; ἀμφίσβαιναν, ἧ Σκύλλαν τινὰ  
 οἰκοῦσαν ἐν πέτραισι, ναυτίλων βλάβην,  
 θύουσαν Ἄιδου μητέρ' ἄσπονδόν τ' ἄρην 680  
 φίλοις πνέουσαν; ὡς δ' ἐπωλολύξατο  
 ἢ παντότολμος, ὥσπερ ἐν μάχης τροπῇ.  
 δοκεῖ δὲ χαίρειν νοστήμῳ σωτηρίᾳ.  
 καὶ τῶνδ' ὅμοιον εἴ τι μὴ πείθω· τί γάρ;  
 τὸ μέλλον ἤξει. καὶ σύ μ' ἐν τάχει παρῶν 685  
 ἄγαν γ' ἀληθόμαντιν οἰκτείρας ἐρεῖς. .

Χο. τὴν μὲν Θυέστου δαῖτα παιδείων κρεῶν  
 ξυνηκα καὶ πέφρικα, καὶ φόβος μ' ἔχει  
 κλύοντ' ἀληθῶς οὐδὲν ἐξηκασμένα.  
 τὰ δ' ἄλλ' ἀκούσας ἐκ δρόμου πεσῶν τρέχω. 690

Κα. Ἀγαμέμνονός σέ φημ' ἐπόψεσθαι μόρον.

Χο. εὐφημον, ὦ τάλαινα, κοίμησον στόμα.

Κα. ἀλλ' οὔτι Παιῶν τῶδ' ἐπιστατεῖ λόγῳ.

Χο. οὐκ, εἴπερ ἔσται γ'. ἀλλὰ μὴ γένοιτό πως.

Κα. σὺ μὲν κατεύχει, τοῖς δ' ἀποκτείνειν μέλει. 695

Χο. τίνος πρὸς ἀνδρὸς τοῦτ' ἄχος πορσύνεται;

Κα. ἧ κάρτα τᾶρ' ἂν παρεκόπτης χρησμῶν ἐμῶν.

Χο. τοῦ γὰρ τελούντος οὐ ξυνηκα μηχανήν.

Κα. καὶ μὴν ἄγαν γ' Ἑλλήν' ἐπίσταμαι φάτιν.

Χο. καὶ γὰρ τὰ πυθόκραντα· δυσμαθῆ δ' ὅμως. 700

Κα. παπαῖ, οἶον τὸ πῦρ· ἐπέρχεται δέ μοι.

ὄτοτοῖ, Λύκει' Ἀπολλων, οἱ ἐγὼ ἐγώ.

αὕτη δίπους λέαινα συγκοιμωμένη

λύκῳ, λέοντος εὐγενοῦς ἀπουσίᾳ,

κτενεῖ με τὴν τάλαιναν· ὡς δὲ φάρμακον 705

τεύχουσα κάμου μισθὸν ἐνθήσει κότῳ

Sharpening her man-slaying sword, she vows  
 | Bloodily to repay my bringing hither.  
 Why then to my own derision bear I these—  
 This wand, these mantic fillets round my neck?  
 Thee at least, ere I perish, will I destroy.  
 Down to the ground I cast you, and thus requite you.  
 Enrich some other, as ye did me, with doom.  
 But lo, Apollo himself strips off from me,  
 My prophet's robe, now the spectacle grows stale  
 Of his victim in these vestments laughed to scorn  
 By friends and foes alike, and all in vain—  
 And like a vagabond mountebank such names  
 As beggar, wretch or starveling I endured—  
 | And now this seer, being finished with my seership,  
 , Has brought me to be murdered in this place,  
 , Where awaiteth me no altar of my home,  
 But a block whereon the last blood yet is warm.  
 Yet not forgotten of Heaven shall we die.  
 There shall come one to vindicate us, born  
 To slay his mother and avenge his sire.  
 A wandering homeless outlaw shall he return  
 To cope the fabric of ancestral sin.  
 For with a mighty oath the Gods have sworn,  
 His father's outstretched corpse shall draw him home.  
 Why then do I stand thus wailing piteously?  
 I will meet my fate: I will endure to die.  
 These gates, as they were Hades' gates, I hail  
 And that the stroke be mortal is my prayer:  
 So swiftly and easily shall my blood gush forth,  
 And without struggle shall I close my eyes.

*Ch.* Woman, so hapless, yet withal so wise,  
 Long hast thou held us listening; yet if verily



κἀπεύχεται θήγουσα φωτὶ φάσγανον  
 ἐμῆς ἀγωγῆς ἀντιτίσασθαι φόνον.  
 τί δῆτ' ἐμαυτῆς καταγέλωτ' ἔχω τάδε,  
 καὶ σκῆπτρα καὶ μαντεῖα περὶ δέρη στέφη; 710  
 σὲ μὲν πρὸ μοίρας τῆς ἐμῆς διαφθερῶ.  
 ἴτ' ἐς φθόρον· πεσόντα θ' ὦδ' ἀμείψομαι.  
 ἄλλην τιν' ἄτης ἀντ' ἐμοῦ πλουτίζετε.  
 ἰδοὺ δ' Ἀπόλλων αὐτὸς ἐκδύων ἐμὲ  
 χρηστηρίαν ἐσθήτ', ἐποπτεύσας δέ με 715  
 κὰν τοῖσδε κόσμοις καταγελωμένην μέγα  
 φίλων ὑπ' ἐχθρῶν οὐ διχορρόπως, μάτην—  
 καλουμένη δὲ φοιτὰς ὡς ἀγύρτρια  
 πτωχὸς τάλαινα λιμοθνῆς ἠνεσχόμην—  
 καὶ νῦν ὁ μάντις μάντιν ἐκπράξας ἐμὲ 720  
 ἀπήγαγ' ἐς τοιάσδε θανασίμους τύχας.  
 βωμοῦ πατρώου δ' ἀντ' ἐπίξηνον μένει,  
 θερμὸν κοπέντος φοινῖω προσφάγματι.  
 οὐ μὴν ἄτιμοί γ' ἐκ θεῶν τεθνήξομεν.  
 ἤξει γὰρ ἡμῶν ἄλλος αὖ τιμᾶορος, 725  
 μητροκτόνον φίλυμα, ποινάτωρ πατρός·  
 φυγὰς δ' ἀλήτης τῆσδε γῆς ἀπόξενος  
 κάτεισιν, ἄτας τάσδε θριγκώσων φίλοις·  
 ὁμώμοται γὰρ ὄρκος ἐκ θεῶν μέγας,  
 ἄξειν νιν ὑπτίασμα κειμένου πατρός. 730  
 τί δῆτ' ἐγὼ κάτοικτος ὦδ' ἀναστένω;  
 ἰοῦσα πράξω· τλήσομαι τὸ κατθανεῖν.  
 Ἄιδου πύλας δὲ τάσδ' ἐγὼ προσευνέπω·  
 ἐπεύχομαι δὲ καιρίας πληγῆς τυχεῖν,  
 ὡς ἀσφάδαστος, αἰμάτων εὐθνησίμων 735  
 ἀπορρυνέντων, ὄμμα συμβάλω τόδε.

Χο. ὦ πολλὰ μὲν τάλαινα, πολλὰ δ' αὖ σοφῆ  
 γύναι, μακρὰν ἔτεινας. εἰ δ' ἐτητύμως

Thou knowest thine own doom, how, as some heaven-  
led victim,

Patiently to the altar canst thou move?

*Ka.* There is no escape, friends, none, when time is full.

*Ch.* Yes, but time's last hour still is found the best.

*Ka.* The day is come. Little were gained by flight.

*Ch.* Truly a patient fortitude is thine.

*Ka.* Such praise none heareth to whom fate is kind.

*Ch.* Yet is there comfort in a glorious death.

*Ka.* Alas my father! thou and thy noble children!

*Ch.* Why dost thou start? What terror turns thee back?

*Ka.* Foul! Foul!

*Ch.* Why criest thou foul? Is it some brainsick loathing?

*Ka.* Horror this house exhales from blood-dript walls.

*Ch.* Nay, nay, 'tis naught but odours of hearth-sacrifice.

*Ka.* 'Tis such a reek as riseth from a sepulchre.

Yet will I enter, and there bewail my fate  
And Agamemnon's. I have lived long enough.  
Alas, my friends!

I clamour not like a bird that dreads a bush.

Idly. When I am dead confirm my words,

When another woman for my death shall die,

And for a man ill-mated a man falls.

I claim this office as at point to die.

*Ch.* Poor wretch, I pity thy prophetic doom.

*Ka.* Yet once more would I speak—or is not this  
My own dirge rather? To the sun I pray,  
This last seen by me, that when my champions come,  
My foes may pay murder's price for me too,  
For this poor slave's death, their inglorious prey.

- μόρου τὸν αὐτῆς οἶσθα, πῶς θεηλάτου  
 βοὸς δίκην πρὸς βωμὸν εὐτόλμως πατεῖς; 740
- Κα.** οὐκ ἔστ' ἄλυξις, οὐ, ξένοι, χρόνον πλέω.
- Χο.** ὁ δ' ὕστατός γε τοῦ χρόνου πρεσβεύεται.
- Κα.** ἦκει τόδ' ἡμαρ· σμικρὰ κερδανῶ φυγῆ.
- Χο.** ἀλλ' ἴσθι τλήμων οὐσ' ἀπ' εὐτόλμου φρενός.
- Κα.** οὐδεὶς ἀκούει ταῦτα τῶν εὐδαιμόνων. 745
- Χο.** ἀλλ' εὐκλεῶς τοι κατθανεῖν χάρις βροτῶ.
- Κα.** ἰὼ πάτερ σοῦ τῶν τε γενναίων τέκνων.
- Χο.** τί δ' ἐστὶ χρῆμα; τίς σ' ἀποστρέφει φόβος;
- Κα.** φεῦ φεῦ.
- Χο.** τί τοῦτ' ἔφευξας; εἴ τι μὴ φρενῶν στύγος. 750
- Κα.** φόνον δόμοι πνέουσιν αἱματοσταγῆ.
- Χο.** καὶ πῶς; τόδ' ὄζει θυμάτων ἐφεστίων.
- Κα.** ὅμοιος ἀτμὸς ὥσπερ ἐκ τάφου πρέπει.  
 ἀλλ' εἶμι κὰν δόμοισι κωκύσουσ' ἐμῆν  
 Ἄγαμέμνονός τε μοῖραν. ἀρκείτω βίος. 755  
 ἰὼ ξένοι.
- οὔτοι δυσοίζω θάμνον ὡς ὄρνις φόβῳ  
 ἄλλως· θανούση μαρτυρεῖτέ μοι τόδε,  
 ὅταν γυνὴ γυναικὸς ἀντ' ἐμοῦ θάνῃ,  
 ἀνὴρ τε δυσδάμαρτος ἀντ' ἀνδρὸς πέσῃ. 760  
 ἐπιξενούμαι ταῦτα δ' ὡς θανουμένη.
- Χο.** ὦ τλήμων, οἰκτεῖρω σε θεσφάτου μόρου.
- Κα.** ἀπαξ ἔτ' εἰπεῖν ῥῆσιν ἢ θρήνον θέλω  
 ἐμὸν τὸν αὐτῆς. ἠλίου δ' ἐπεύχομαι  
 πρὸς ὕστατον φῶς τοῖς ἐμοῖς τιμαόροις 765  
 ἐχθροὺς φόνευσιν τοὺς ἐμοὺς τίνειν ὁμοῦ  
 δούλης θανούσης, εὐμαροῦς χειρώματος.

Alas for man's estate! His happiness  
Shows like a sketch, a shadow: but his misery—  
'Tis a picture by a wet sponge dashed clean out.  
And this is the more pitiable by far.

[*Exit.*]

*Ag.* [*within*]. Ah me! I am smitten—to the heart, a  
mortal stroke!

*Ch.* Silence! Who is that cries out as smitten by a  
mortal wound?

*Ag.* Ah me! Again! A second time, a murderous  
stroke!

*Ch. I.* Done is now the deed, I fear me. That is the death-  
groan of the king.

Come let us consult, if haply some safe counsel we  
may find.

2. This is my counsel, that we summon hither  
A rescue of the townfolk to the palace.

3. And I say, with all speed let us burst in,  
And prove the foul deed while the sword yet drips.

[*As they are about to enter the palace, the scene opens  
and discloses CLYTAEMNESTRA standing over the  
bodies of AGAMEMNON and KASSANDRA.*]

*Cl.* All that I spoke before to serve the time,  
I shall feel no shame now to contradict.  
For how by avowing open hate to enemies,  
Presumed to be our friends, could we build up  
Destruction's toils too high to be overleapt?  
By me long since against victory long-deferred  
Was planned this duel, yet at last it came.  
Here stand I where I struck, my work achieved.

ὡ βρότεια πράγματ'· εὐτυχοῦντα μὲν  
σκιά τις ἂν πρέψειεν· εἰ δὲ δυστυχήῃ,  
βολαῖς ὑγρώσσω σπόγγος ὄλεσεν γραφήν. 770  
καὶ ταῦτ' ἐκείνων μᾶλλον οἰκτείρω πολύ.

[Exit.]

Αγ. ὦμοι, πέπληγμαι καιρίαν πληγὴν ἔσω.

Χο. σίγα· τίς πληγὴν αὐτεῖ καιρίως οὐτασμένος;

Αγ. ὦμοι μάλ' αὖθις, δευτέραν πεπληγμένος.

Χο.ι. τοῦργον εἰργάσθαι δοκεῖ μοι βασιλέως οἰμώ-  
γματι. 775

ἀλλὰ κοινωσώμεθ' ἦν πως ἀσφαλῆ βουλευμάτ'  
ἦ.—

2. ἐγὼ μὲν ὑμῖν τὴν ἐμὴν γνώμην λέγω,  
πρὸς δῶμα δεῦρ' ἀστοῖσι κηρύσσειν βοήν.—

3. ἐμοὶ δ' ὅπως τάχιστα γ' ἐμπεσεῖν δοκεῖ  
καὶ πρᾶγμ' ἐλέγχειν σὺν νεορρῦτφ ξίφει.— 780

[As they are about to enter the palace, the scene opens  
and discloses CLYTAEMNESTRA standing over the  
bodies of AGAMEMNON and KASSANDRA.]

Κλ. πολλῶν πάροιθεν καιρίως εἰρημένων  
τάναντί' εἰπεῖν οὐκ ἐπαισχυνθήσομαι.  
πῶς γάρ τις ἐχθροῖς ἐχθρὰ πορσύνων, φίλοις  
δοκοῦσιν εἶναι, πημονῆς ἀρκύστατ' ἂν  
φράξειεν, ὕψος κρεῖσσον ἐκπηδήματος; 785  
ἐμοὶ δ' ἀγῶν ὅδ' οὐκ ἀφρόντιστος πάλαι  
νείκης παλαιᾶς ἦλθε, σὺν χρόνῳ γε μὴν·  
ἔσθηκα δ' ἔνθ' ἐπαισ' ἐπ' ἐξειργασμένοις.

Even so I wrought—this too will I not deny—  
 That neither should he escape nor ward his doom.  
 A blind entanglement, like a net for fish,  
 I swathe around him, an evil wealth of robe.  
 And twice do I smite him, till at the second groan  
 There did his limbs sink down; and as he lies,  
 A third stroke do I deal him, unto Hades,  
 Safe-keeper of dead men, a votive gift.  
 Therewith he lies still, gasping out his life:  
 And spouting forth a vehement jet of blood  
 Strikes me with a dark splash of murderous dew,  
 No less rejoicing than in Heaven's sweet rain  
 The corn doth at the birth-throes of the ear.  
 The truth being such, ye grave elders of Argos,  
 Rejoice, if so ye may; but I exult.

*Ch.* We marvel at thine audacity of tongue

To glory in such terms over thy slain lord.

*Cl.* Ye assail me as though I were a witless woman.

But I with heart unshaken what all know

Declare—whether thou praise me or condemn,

'Tis all one—this is Agamemnon, mine

Own husband, done to death by this right hand's

Most righteous workmanship. The case stands so.

*Ch.* Woman, what earth-engendered

Venomous herb, or what evil drug,

Scum of the restless sea, canst thou have tasted of,

Thus to incur the loud fury of a people's curse?

Away thou hast cast, away thou hast cleft, away shall  
 the city fling thee,

A monstrous burden of loathing.

*Cl.* Yes, now for me thou doonest banishment,

A city's loathing and a people's curses:

- οὕτω δ' ἔπραξα, καὶ τάδ' οὐκ ἀρνήσομαι·  
 ὡς μήτε φεύγειν μήτ' ἀμύνεσθαι μόρον,  
 ἄπειρον ἀμφίβληστρον, ὥσπερ ἰχθύων,  
 περιστιχίζω, πλοῦτον εἴματος κακόν.  
 παίω δέ νιν δῖς· κὰν δυοῖν οἰμώγμασιν  
 μεθήκεν αὐτοῦ κῶλα· καὶ πεπτωκότη  
 τρίτην ἐπευδίδωμι, τοῦ κατὰ χθονὸς 790  
 "Αἰδου νεκρῶν σωτήρος εὐκταίαν χάριν.  
 οὕτω τὸν αὐτοῦ θυμὸν ὀρμαίνει πεσῶν·  
 κάκφυσιῶν ὀξειᾶν αἵματος σφαγὴν  
 βάλλει μ' ἔρεμνῇ ψακάδι φοινίας δρόσου,  
 χαίρουσαν οὐδὲν ἦσσον ἢ διισδότῳ 800  
 γάνει σπορητὸς κάλυκος ἐν λοχεύμασιν.  
 ὡς ᾧδ' ἐχόντων, πρέσβος Ἄργείων τόδε,  
 χαίροιτ' ἄν, εἰ χαίροιτ', ἐγὼ δ' ἐπεύχομαι.
- Χο. θαυμάζομέν σου γλῶσσαν, ὡς θρασύστομος,  
 ἦτις τοιόνδ' ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ κομπάζεις λόγον. 805
- Κλ. πειρᾶσθέ μου γυναικὸς ὡς ἀφράσμονος·  
 ἐγὼ δ' ἀτρέστῳ καρδίᾳ πρὸς εἰδότας  
 λέγω· σὺ δ' αἰνεῖν εἶτε με ψέγειν θέλεις  
 ὅμοιον. οὗτός ἐστιν Ἄγαμέμνων, ἐμὸς  
 πόσις, νεκρὸς δέ, τῆσδε δεξιᾶς χερὸς 810  
 ἔργον, δικαίας τέκτονος. τάδ' ᾧδ' ἔχει.
- Χο. τί κακόν, ᾧ γυναί, χθονοτρεφὲς ἔδανον ἢ ποτὸν  
 πασαμένα ρυτᾶς ἐξ ἄλως ὄρμενον  
 τόδ' ἐπέθου θύος, δημοθρόους τ' ἀράς;  
 ἀπέδικες τ' ἀπέταμές τ' ἀπόπολις δ' ἔσει 815  
 μῖσος ὄβριμον ἀστοῖς.
- Κλ. νῦν μὲν δικάζεις ἐκ πόλεως φυγῆν ἐμοὶ  
 καὶ μῖσος ἀστῶν δημόθρους τ' ἔχειν ἀράς,

Yet once no whit didst thou withstand this man,  
 Who recking not, as 'twere a beast that died,  
 Although his woolly flocks bare sheep enough,  
 Sacrificed his own child, that dear delight  
 Born of my pangs, to charm the winds of Thrace.

*Ch.* Insolent is thy mood,  
 Thine utterance arrogant. Therefore even  
 As with the deed of blood frenzied is now thy soul,  
 So doth a gory smear fitly adorn thy brow.  
 With none to avenge, none to befriend, verily yet shall  
 Stroke for stroke in reprisal. [you pay

*Cl.* This likewise shalt thou hear, my solemn oath:  
 By the Justice here accomplished for my child,  
 By the Sin and Doom, whose victim here I have slain,  
 Not for me doth Hope tread the halls of Fear,  
 While yet fire on my hearth is kindled by  
 Aegisthus, my kind friend as heretofore.  
 For yonder, no small shield for our assurance,  
 Lies low the man who outraged his own wife,  
 Darling of each Chryseis under Troy,  
 And by him this bond-slave and augress,  
 His oracle-delivering concubine,  
 Who, as his faithful couch-mate, shared with him  
 The mariners' bench. But punished are they now.  
 For he fare thus: and she, now she has wailed  
 Swan-like her last lamenting song of death,  
 Lies there, his lover, adding a delicate  
 New seasoning to the luxury of my couch.

*Ch.* Oh for a speedy death, painless without a throe,  
 No lingering bedridden sickness,  
 A gentle death, bearing sleep eternal,



οὐδὲν τότ' ἀνδρὶ τῶδ' ἐναντίον φέρων·  
 ὃς οὐ προτιμῶν, ὡσπερὲι βοτοῦ μόρον, 820  
 μήλων φλεόντων εὐπόκοις νομεύμασιν,  
 ἔθυσεν αὐτοῦ παῖδα, φιλτάτην ἐμοὶ  
 ὠδίν', ἐπωδὸν Θρηκίων ἀημάτων.

Χο. μεγαλόμητις εἶ, περίφρονα δ' ἔλακες· ὡσπερ οὖν  
 φονολιβεῖ τύχα φρῆν ἐπιμαίνεται· 825  
 λίπος ἐπ' ὀμμάτων αἵματος ἐμπρέπει·  
 ἀτίετον δ' ἔτι σὲ χρῆ στερομέναν φίλων  
 τύμμα τύμματι τίσαι.

Κλ. καὶ τήνδ' ἀκούεις ὀρκίων ἐμῶν θέμιν·  
 μὰ τὴν τέλειον τῆς ἐμῆς παιδὸς Δίκην, 830  
 Ἄτην Ἐρινύν θ', αἴσι τόνδ' ἔσφαξ' ἐγώ,  
 οὐ μοι φόβου μέλαθρον ἐλπὶς ἐμπατεῖ,  
 ἕως ἂν αἴθῃ πῦρ ἐφ' ἐστίας ἐμῆς  
 Αἴγισθος, ὡς τὸ πρόσθεν εὖ φρονῶν ἐμοί.  
 οὔτος γὰρ ἡμῖν ἀσπίς οὐ σμικρὰ θράσους. 835  
 κεῖται γυναικὸς τῆσδε λυμανθήριος,  
 Χρυσηίδων μείλιγμα τῶν ὑπ' Ἰλίῳ·  
 ἢ τ' αἰχμάλωτος ἦδε καὶ τερασκόπος  
 καὶ κοινόλεκτρος τοῦδε, θεσφαιτηλόγος  
 πιστὴ ξύννευος, ναυτίλων δὲ σελμάτων 840  
 ἰσοτριβῆς. ἄτιμα δ' οὐκ ἐπραξάτην.  
 ὁ μὲν γὰρ οὕτως, ἢ δέ τοι κύκνου δίκην  
 τὸν ὕστατον μέλψασα θανάσιμον γόου  
 κεῖται φιλήτωρ τῶδ', ἐμοὶ δ' ἐπήγαγεν  
 εὐνήσ παροψώνημα τῆς ἐμῆς χλιδῆν. 845

Χο. φεῦ, τίς ἂν ἐν τάχει, μὴ περιώδυνος,  
 μηδὲ δεμνιοτήρης,  
 μόλοι τὸν αἰεὶ φέρουσ' ἐν ἡμῖν

Sleep without end, for to us the kindest,  
 Truest of guardians is lost,  
 Who for a woman's sin endured toils untold;  
 Yea, and by a woman's hand he fell.

Demon, who o'er the house broodest, and o'er the twi-  
 Branching Tantalid offspring,  
 And through the wives, equals in destruction,  
 Wieldest a power, to my heart an anguish!  
 Now on the carcase like a loathed  
 Carrion crow perched he stands, and gloryingly  
 Chanting forth croaks his tuneless hymn.

*Cl.* Now thy judgment hast thou amended,  
 Since thou accusest  
 The thrice-gorged demon of this whole lineage.  
 For from him is bred this lust of the heart  
 For blood to be lapped—ere yet the old woe  
 Is over and gone, ever fresh gore.

*Ch.* Ay me! Ay me! My king, my king!  
 How shall I weep thee?  
 What word shall I speak from a loving heart?  
 In this spider's web to be lying thus caught,  
 By a foul death gasping thy soul forth!  
 Ah me, me! couched thus shamefully like a slave,  
 Stricken down by a deadly hand  
 Craftily armed with a cleaving sword-blade!

*Cl.* Do you dare to avouch this deed to be mine?  
 Nay, fancy not even  
 That in me Agamemnon's spouse you behold:  
 But disguised as the wife of the man who is slain  
 Yonder, the ancient wrathful Avenger  
 Of Atreus, that grim feaster, hath found

Μοῖρ' ἀτέλευτον ὕπνου, δαμέντος  
 φύλακος εὐμενεστάτου  
 850  
 πολέα τλάντος γυναικὸς διαί ;  
 πρὸς γυναικὸς δ' ἀπέφθισεν.

δαῖμον, ὃς ἐμπίτνεις δώμασι καὶ  
 διφυίοισι Τανταλίδαισιν,  
 855  
 κράτος τ' ἰσόψυχον ἐκ γυναικῶν  
 καρδιόδηκτον ἐμοὶ κρατύνεις.  
 ἐπὶ δὲ σώματος δίκαν μοι  
 κόρακος ἐχθροῦ σταθεῖς' ἐκνόμως  
 ὕμνον ὑμνεῖν ἐπέύχεται.

Κλ. νῦν δ' ὄρθωσας στόματος γνώμην,  
 860  
 τὸν τριπάχυντον  
 δαίμονα γέννης τῆσδε κικλήσκων.  
 ἐκ τοῦ γὰρ ἔρωσ αἱματολοιχὸς  
 νειριτροφεῖται, πρὶν καταλήξαι  
 865  
 τὸ παλαιὸν ἄχος, νέος ἰχώρ.

Χο. ἰὼ ἰὼ βασιλεῦ βασιλεῦ,  
 πῶς σε δακρύσω ;  
 φρενὸς ἐκ φιλίας τί ποτ' εἶπω ;  
 κείσαι δ' ἀράχνης ἐν ὑφάσματι τῷδ'  
 870  
 ἀσεβεῖ θανάτῳ βίον ἐκπνέων.  
 ὦμοι μοι κοίταν τάνδ' ἀνελεύθερον  
 δολίῳ μόρῳ δαμείς  
 ἐκ χερὸς ἀμφιτόμῳ βελέμνω.

Κλ. αὐχεῖς εἶναι τόδε τοὔργον ἐμόν·  
 875  
 μηδ' ἐπίλεχθῆς  
 Ἄγαμεμνονίαν εἶναί μ' ἄλοχον.  
 φανταζόμενος δὲ γυναικὶ νεκροῦ  
 τοῦδ' ὁ παλαιὸς δριμύς ἀλάστωρ  
 Ἄτρέως χαλεποῦ θοινατῆρος

Yonder a full-grown  
Victim for the ghosts of the children.

*Ch.* That thou of the blood here shed  
Art innocent, who shall essay to witness?  
No, no! Yet the fiend avenging  
The father's sin may have aided.  
And swept along on floods of gore  
From slaughtered kindred by the red  
Deity of Strife, he comes where he must pay now  
For the caked blood of the mangled infants.

*Cl.* What, did not he too wreak on his household  
As crafty a crime?  
Nay but the branch he grafted upon me,  
My long-wept-for Iphigeneia,  
Even as he dealt with her, so is he faring:  
Therefore in Hades let him not boast now.  
As he sinned by the sword,  
So is death by the sword his atonement.

*Ch.* In blank amaze, reft of thought's resourceful  
Counselling aid, I know not  
Which way to turn, now the house is falling.  
I dread the fierce, crashing storm that wrecks the home,  
The storm of blood. Ceased is now the small rain.  
But Justice is but whetting for some other deed  
Of bale her sword's edge on other whetstones.

Ay me! Earth, Earth! Would thou hadst covered me,  
Or ere in the silver-sided bath  
Outstretched in death I had seen him!  
Who shall make his grave? Who shall sing his dirge?  
Who by the tomb of the deified hero weeping

τόνδ' ἀπέτισεν,  
τέλεον νεαροῖς ἐπιθύσαις. 880

Χο. ὡς μὲν ἀναίτιος εἶ  
τοῦδε φόνου τίς ὁ μαρτυρήσων;  
πῶ πῶ; πατρόθεν δὲ συλλή-  
πτωρ γένοιτ' ἂν ἀλάστωρ. 885  
βιάζεται δ' ὁμοσπόροις  
ἐπιρροαῖσιν αἱμάτων  
μέλας Ἄρης, ὅποι δίκαν προβαίνων  
πάχνα κουροβόρῳ παρέξει.

Κλ. οὐδὲ γὰρ οὗτος δολίαν ἄτην 890  
οἴκοισιν ἔθηκ';  
ἀλλ' ἐμὸν ἐκ τοῦδ' ἔρνος ἀερθέν,  
τὴν πολυκλαύτην Ἴφιγενεΐαν,  
ἄξια δράσας ἄξια πάσχων  
μηδὲν ἐν Ἄιδου μεγαλαυχίτῳ, 895  
ξιφοδηλήτῳ  
θανάτῳ τίσας ἄπερ ἦρξεν.

Χο. ἀμηχανῶ φροντίδος στερηθεὶς  
εὐπάλαμον μέριμναν  
ὅπα τράπωμαι, πίτνοντος οἴκου. 900  
δέδοικα δ' ὄμβρου κτύπον δομοσφαλῆ  
τὸν αἱματηρόν· ψακὰς δὲ λήγει.  
Δίκη δ' ἐπ' ἄλλο πρᾶγμα θηγάνει βλάβης  
πρὸς ἄλλαις θηγάναισιν ἄορ.

ἰὼ γὰ γὰ, εἴθ' ἔμ' ἐδέξω,  
πρὶν τόνδ' ἐπιδεῖν ἀργυροτοίχου 905  
δροίτας κατέχοντα χαμεύνην.  
τίς ὁ θάψων νιν; τίς ὁ θρηνήσων;  
τίς δ' ἐπιτύμβιον αἶνον ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ θείῳ 910

Shall chant his praise, and bowed down  
In unfeigned grief of heart lament him?

*Cl.* Thee it beseems not herein to concern thee:

No, for beneath *us*

He bowed, he lay dead, and below shall we bury him,

Not to a mourning household's dirges,

But Iphigeneia with welcome blithe,

As a daughter should,

Shall encounter her sire at the swift-flowing strait

Of Wailing, and there

Fling around him her arms and shall kiss him.

*Ch.* Reviling thus answereth reviling.

Hard to adjudge the strife seems.

The spoiler is spoiled, the slayer pays reprisal.

While on his throne Zeus abides, abides the truth:

Who doth the deed, suffereth: so the law stands.

Who from the house shall cast the brood of curses  
forth?

The whole race is welded fast to ruin.

*Cl.* When you stumbled upon this saw, 'twas truth

Led thee. But I now

With the fiend of the Pleisthenid race consent

This treaty to swear: what is done, we accept,

Hard be it to bear, if he will but quit

Henceforth this house, and afflict with kindred  
Murder some other race instead.

Though mine be a small

Portion of wealth, that in full shall suffice me,

If I thus may cleanse

These halls from the frenzy of blood-feud.

ξὺν δακρύοις ἰάπτων  
ἀλαθείᾳ φρενῶν πονήσει;

- Κλ. οὐ σέ προσήκει τὸ μέλημ' ἀλέγειν  
τοῦτο· πρὸς ἡμῶν  
κάππεσε, κάθθανε, καὶ καταθάψομεν 915  
οὐχ ὑπὸ κλαυθμῶν τῶν ἐξ οἴκων, ...  
ἀλλ' Ἴφιγένειά νιν ἀσπασίως  
θυγάτηρ, ὡς χρῆ,  
πατέρ' ἀντιάσασα πρὸς ὠκύπορον  
πόρθμευμ' ἀχέων 920  
περὶ χεῖρε βαλοῦσα φιλήσει.

- Χο. ὄνειδος ἤκει τόδ' ἀντ' ὄνειδους.  
δύσμαχα δ' ἔστι κρῖναι.  
φέρει φέροντ', ἐκτίνει δ' ὁ καίνων.  
μίμνει δὲ μίμνοντος ἐν θρόνῳ Διὸς 925  
παθεῖν τὸν ἔρξαντα· θέσμιον γάρ.  
τίς ἂν γονὰν ἀραῖον ἐκβάλοι δόμων;  
κεκόλληται γένος πρὸς ἄτα.

- Κλ. ἐς τόνδ' ἐνέβης ξὺν ἀληθείᾳ  
χρησμόν. ἐγὼ δ' οὔν 930  
ἐθέλω δαίμοι τῷ Πλεισθениδῶν  
ὄρκους θεμένη τάδε μὲν στέργειν,  
δύστυχητά περ ὄνθ'· ὃ δὲ λοιπόν, ἰόντ'  
ἐκ τῶνδε δόμων ἄλλην γενεὰν  
τρίβειν θανάτοις αὐθένταισι· 935  
κτεάνων τε μέρος  
βαιὸν ἐχούση πᾶν ἀπόχρη μοι  
μανίας μελάθρων  
ἀλληλοφόνους ἀφελούση.

[*Enter AEGISTHUS attended by a body-guard  
of spearmen.*]

AEGISTHUS

O glad dawn of the day that brings redress!  
 Now can I say that from above earth Gods  
 Look down to avenge the sorrows of mankind,  
 Now that I see this man in woven robes  
 Of Retribution stretched dead to my joy,  
 Paying in full for a father's crafty sin.  
 For Atreus, lord of Argos, this man's sire,  
 Atreus, with zeal scarce welcome to my father,  
 Feigning to hold a joyful feasting day,  
 Served him a banquet of his children's flesh.  
 The extremities, the feet and fingered hands,  
 He kept concealed, the rest disguised he set  
 Before Thyestes, where he sat apart:  
 Who at the first unwitting took and ate  
 That food now proved unwholesome to his race.  
 Then, recognizing the unhallowed deed,  
 He groaned, and falls back vomiting the sacrifice,  
 And calls a fell doom on the sons of Pelops,  
 Kicking the table away to aid his curse:  
 That thus might perish all the race of Pleisthenes.  
 For such cause do you see this man laid low;  
 And justly so did I contrive this slaughter.  
 While yet I dwelt abroad I reached my foe,  
 Weaving this dark conspiracy's whole plot.  
 Thus glorious were death itself to me,  
 Now I have seen him caught in toils of Justice.

*Ch.* Aegisthus, I scorn to insult distress:

But dost thou own wilfully to have slain him,  
 And alone to have contrived this woeful murder,



[Enter AEGISTHUS attended by a body-guard  
of spearmen.]

## ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

- ὦ φέγγος εὐφρον ἡμέρας δικηφόρου. 940  
 φαίην ἂν ἤδη νῦν βροτῶν τιμαόρους  
 θεοὺς ἄνωθεν γῆς ἐποπτεύειν ἄχη,  
 ἰδὼν ὑφαντοῖς ἐν πέπλοις Ἐρινύων  
 τὸν ἄνδρα τόνδε κείμενον φίλως ἐμοί,  
 χερὸς πατρῴας ἐκτίνοντα μηχανάς. 945  
 Ἄτρεὺς γὰρ ἄρχων τῆσδε γῆς, τούτου πατῆρ  
 Ἄτρεὺς, προθύμως μᾶλλον ἢ φίλως, πατρί  
 τῶμῳ, κρεουργὸν ἡμᾶρ εὐθύμως ἄγειν  
 δοκῶν, παρέσχε δαῖτα παιδείων κρεῶν.  
 τὰ μὲν ποδῆρη καὶ χερῶν ἄκρους κτένας 950  
 ἔκρυπτ' ἄνωθεν ἄνδρ' ἐκάς καθήμενον  
 ἄσημ'. ὁ δ' αὐτῶν ἀντίκ' ἀγνοία λαβὼν  
 ἔσθει βορὰν ἄσωτον, ὡς ὄρας, γένει.  
 κάπειτ' ἐπιγνοὺς ἔργον οὐ καταίσιον  
 ᾤμωξεν, ἀμπίπτει δ' ἀπὸ σφαγῆν ἐρῶν, 955  
 μόρον δ' ἄφερτον Πελοπίδαις ἐπεύχεται,  
 λάκτισμα δείπνου ξυνδίκως τιθεὶς ἀρᾶ,  
 οὕτως ὀλέσθαι πᾶν τὸ Πλεισθένους γένος.  
 ἐκ τῶνδ' εἰ σοὶ πεσόντα τόνδ' ἰδεῖν πάρα.  
 καὶ γὰρ δίκαιος τοῦδε τοῦ φόνου ῥαφεύς. 960  
 καὶ τοῦδε τάνδρὸς ἠψάμην θυραῖος ὢν,  
 πᾶσαν συνάψας μηχανὴν δυσβουλίας.  
 οὕτω καλὸν δὴ καὶ τὸ κατθανεῖν ἐμοί,  
 ἰδόντα τοῦτον τῆς δίκης ἐν ἔρκεσιν.
- Χο. Αἰγισθ', ὑβρίζειν ἐν κακοῖσιν οὐ σέβω. 965  
 σὺ δ' ἄνδρα τόνδε φῆς ἐκὼν κατακτανεῖν,  
 μόνος δ' ἔποικτον τόνδε βουλευσαι φόνον·

Know thine own head, judged guilty, shall not scape  
The curses of a people flung in stones.

*Ae.* Thou to prate so, benched at the lowest oar,  
While those of the upper tier control the ship!  
Your old age shall be told how bitter it is  
To be schooled in discreetness at your years.  
Bonds and the pangs of hunger are supreme  
Physicians to instruct even senile minds  
In wisdom. Doth not this sight make thee see?  
Kick not against the pricks, lest the wound smart.

*Ch.* Thou woman, in wait for returning warriors,  
Lurking at home, defiling a man's bed—  
For a mighty captain didst thou plot this death?

*Ae.* These words likewise shall prove the source of tears.

*Ch.* Thou to be despot of our Argive folk,  
Who durst not, when thou hadst contrived his death,  
Durst not achieve the crime with thine own hand.

*Ae.* The beguiling was the wife's part manifestly.  
I was suspected, a foe by my birth.  
Now with the dead king's treasure will I strive  
To rule this people: but the mutinous man  
I shall yoke sternly, not like a corn-fed colt  
In traces; no, but grim starvation, lodged  
With darkness, shall not leave him till he is tamed.

*Ch.* Why, craven soul, didst thou not kill thy foe  
Unaided, but must join with thee a woman,  
Defilement of our country and its Gods,  
To slay him? Oh, is Orestes living yet,  
That he by fortune's grace returning home  
Victoriously may put both these to death?

*Ae.* Nay, if thus in word and deed you threaten, soon  
shall you be taught.

- οὐ φημ' ἀλύξειν ἐν δίκη τὸ σὸν κᾶρα  
 δημορριφεῖς, σάφ' ἴσθι, λευσίμους ἀράς.
- Αι. σὺ ταῦτα φωνεῖς νερτέρᾳ προσήμενος 970  
 κώπη, κρατούντων τῶν ἐπὶ ζυγῶ δορός;  
 γνώσει γέρων ὦν ὡς διδάσκεισθαι βαρὺ  
 τῷ τηλικούτῳ, σωφρονεῖν εἰρημένον.  
 δεσμὸς δὲ καὶ τὸ γήρας αἶ τε νήστιδες  
 δύαι διδάσκειν ἐξοχώταται φρενῶν 975  
 ἰατρομάντις. οὐχ ὄραῖς ὄρων τάδε;  
 πρὸς κέντρα μὴ λάκτιζε, μὴ παίσας μογιῆς.
- Χο. γύναι, σὺ τοὺς ἤκουτας ἐκ μάχης μένων  
 οἰκουρὸς εὐνήν ἀνδρὸς αἰσχύνων ἅμα  
 ἀνδρὶ στρατηγῶ τόνδ' ἐβούλευσας μόρον; 980
- Αι. καὶ ταῦτα τᾶπη κλαυμάτων ἀρχηγενῆ.
- Χο. ὡς δὴ σύ μοι τύραννος Ἀργείων ἔσει,  
 ὃς οὐκ, ἐπειδὴ τῶδ' ἐβούλευσας μόρον,  
 δρᾶσαι τόδ' ἔργον οὐκ ἔτλης αὐτοκτόνους.
- Αι. τὸ γὰρ δολῶσαι πρὸς γυναικὸς ἦν σαφῶς· 985  
 ἐγὼ δ' ὑποπτος ἐχθρὸς ἦ παλαιγενῆς.  
 ἐκ τῶν δὲ τοῦδε χρημάτων πειράσομαι  
 ἄρχειν πολιτῶν· τὸν δὲ μὴ πειθάνορα  
 ζεύξω βαρεῖαις οὔτι μοι σειραφόρον  
 κριθῶντα πῶλον· ἀλλ' ὁ δυσφιλεῖ σκότῳ 990  
 λιμὸς ξύνοικος μαλθακόν σφ' ἐπόψεται.
- Χο. τί δὴ τὸν ἄνδρα τόνδ' ἀπὸ ψυχῆς κακῆς  
 οὐκ αὐτὸς ἠνᾶριζες, ἀλλὰ νιν γυνῆ  
 χώρας μίασμα καὶ θεῶν ἐγχωρίων  
 ἔκτειν'; Ὁρέστης ἄρά που βλέπει φάος, 995  
 ὅπως κατελθὼν δεῦρο πρευμενεῖ τύχη  
 ἀμφοῖν γένηται τοῖνδε παγκρατῆς φονεύς;
- Αι. ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ δοκεῖς τὰδ' ἔρδειν καὶ λέγειν, γνώσει  
 τάχα.

Forward now, my trusty spearmen! Here is work  
for us at hand.

## SOLDIERS

Forward now! His sword unsheathing, each man  
stand upon his guard.

*Ch.* Nay, I too, my sword unsheathing, shrink not back,  
though I must die.

*So.* Die, thou sayest. The word is welcome. Ours be  
now to make it good.

*Cl.* Nay forbear, my dearest husband. Let us do no  
further ill.

Miseries are here to reap in plenty, a pitiable crop.  
Harm enough is done already: let no blood by us be  
spilt.

Then if haply these afflictions prove enough, there  
let us stop,

Sorely smitten thus already by the heavy heel of fate.  
Sodoth a woman's reason counsel, if so be that any heed.

*Ae.* But for these to let their foolish tongues thus  
blossom into speech,

Flinging out such overweening words, as though to  
tempt their fate!

*Ch.* Never was it Argive fashion to fawn upon a  
villainous man.

*Ae.* Well, I'll visit this upon you soon or late in days  
to come.

*Ch.* That thou shalt not, if but Heaven guide Orestes  
back to his home.

*Ae.* Yes, I know full well myself how banished men  
will feed on hopes.

*Ch.* Do thy worst; wax fat, befouling righteousness,  
while yet thou mayest.

εἶα δὴ, φίλοι λοχίται, τοῦργον οὐχ ἑκάς τόδε.

## ΛΟΧΙΤΑΙ

εἶα δὴ, ξίφος πρόκωπον πᾶς τις εὐτρεπιζέτω.

Χο. ἀλλὰ μὴν καὶ γὰρ πρόκωπος οὐκ ἀναίνομαι θανεῖν.

Λο. δεχομένοις λέγεις θανεῖν σε· τὴν τύχην δ' αἰρού-  
μεθα. 1002

Κλ. μηδαμῶς, ᾧ φίλτατ' ἀνδρῶν, ἄλλα δράσωμεν  
κακά.

ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰδ' ἔξαμῆσαι πολλὰ δύστηνον θέρος·  
πημουῆς δ' ἄλις γ' ὑπάρχει· μηδὲν αἱματώμεθα.  
εἰ δέ τοι μόχθων γένοιτο τῶνδ' ἄλις, δεχοίμεθ'  
ᾶν, 1006

δαίμονος χηλῇ βαρεία δυστυχῶς πεπληγμένοι.  
ᾧδ' ἔχει λόγος γυναικός, εἴ τις ἀξιοῖ μαθεῖν.

Αι. ἀλλὰ τούσδ' ἐμοὶ ματαίαν γλῶσσαν ᾧδ' ἀπαν-  
θίσαι

κακβαλεῖν ἔπη τοιαῦτα δαίμονος πειρωμένους.

Χο. οὐκ ἂν Ἀργείων τόδ' εἴη, φῶτα προσσαίνειν  
κακόν. 1011

Αι. ἀλλ' ἐγὼ σ' ἐν ὑστέραισιν ἡμέραις μέτειμ' ἔτι.

Χο. οὐκ, ἐὰν δαίμων Ὀρέστην δεῦρ' ἀπευθύνη  
μολεῖν.

Αι. οἶδ' ἐγὼ φεύγοντας ἄνδρας ἐλπίδας σιτουμένους.

Χο. πρᾶσσε, πιαίνου, μαιίνων τὴν δίκην, ἐπεὶ πάρα.

- Ae.* Take my warning; for this folly thou shalt make  
amends some day.
- Ch.* Brag: be valiant like a cock who crows and struts  
beside his hen.
- Cl.* Treat with the contempt they merit these vain  
yelpings. Thou and I,  
Now the masters in this palace, will rule all things  
righteously.

Αι. ἴσθι μοι δώσων ἄποινα τῆσδε μωρίας χρόνῳ.

Χο. κόμπασον θαρσῶν, ἀλέκτωρ ὥστε θηλείας  
πέλας.

Κλ. μὴ προτιμήσης ματαίων τῶνδ' ὑλαγμάτων· ἐγὼ  
καὶ σὺ θήσομεν κρατοῦντε τῶνδε δωμάτων  
καλῶς.

1019





THE CHOEPHORI  
OF  
AESCHYLUS

## THE CHOEPHORI

[*The grave of Agamemnon, near the palace of Argos.*]

ORESTES

Nether Hermes, guardian of paternal rights,  
Preserve me and fight with me at my prayer.  
Over this grave's mound on my sire I call  
To hearken, to give heed.  
I was not there, father, to wail thy death,  
Nor did I stretch my hand towards thy bier.

[*Enter ELECTRA and the CHORUS.*]

What is it I see? What is this troop of women  
Approaching in conspicuous black robes  
Of mourning? To what cause should I assign it?  
Hath some new sorrow fallen upon the house?  
Or should I guess they are bringing these libations  
To appease my father in the world below?  
Naught else? Yonder, it must be, walks Electra,  
My sister. By the bitterness of her grief  
I know her. O Zeus, grant me now to avenge  
My sire's death; on my side deign thou to fight.  
Pylades, stand we aside, that I may learn  
More surely who these suppliant women are.

CHORUS

"Go," said she, "from the palace bear  
Libations forth, with sharp resounding stroke of hand."  
Behold, my cheek is newly scarred with crimson,

## THE CHOEPHORI

[The grave of Agamemnon, near the palace of Argos.]

### ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

Ἐρμῆ χθόνιε πατρῶ' ἐποπτεύων κράτη,  
σωτήρ γενοῦ μοι ξύμμαχος τ' αἰτουμένω·  
τύμβου δ' ἐπ' ὄχθῳ τῷδε κηρύσσω πατρὶ  
κλύειν, ἀκοῦσαι.

οὐ γὰρ παρῶν ὄμωξα σόν, πάτερ, μόρον 5  
οὐδ' ἐξέτεινα χεῖρ' ἐπ' ἐκφορᾷ νεκροῦ.

[Enter ELEGTRA and the CHORUS.]

τί χρήμα λεύσσω; τίς ποθ' ἤδ' ὀμήγουρις  
στείχει γυναικῶν φάρεσιν μελαγχίμοις  
πρέπουσα; ποία ξυμφορᾷ προσεικάσω;  
πότερα δόμοισι πῆμα προσκυρεῖ νέον; 10  
ἢ πατρὶ τῶμῳ τάσδ' ἐπεικάσας τύχῳ  
χοᾶς φερούσας νερτέροις μειλίγματα;  
οὐδέν ποτ' ἄλλο· καὶ γὰρ Ἥλέκτραν δοκῶ  
στείχειν ἀδελφὴν τὴν ἐμὴν πένθει λυγρῶ  
πρέπουσαν. ὦ Ζεῦ, δός με τίσασθαι μόρον 15  
πατρός, γενοῦ δὲ σύμμαχος θέλων ἐμοί.  
Πυλάδῃ, σταθῶμεν ἐκποδῶν, ὡς ἂν σαφῶς  
μάθῳ γυναικῶν ἥτις ἦδε προστροπή.

### ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰαλτὸς ἐκ δόμων ἔβαν [στρ. α.  
χοᾶς προπομπὸς ὀξύχειρι σὺν κτύπῳ. 20  
πρέπει παρηὺς φοινίους ἀμυγμοῖς

Rent by the bloodily furrowing nail!  
 At all hours feeds my heart on lamentation ceaselessly.  
 A scream was heard of linen torn,  
 As in my agony I ripped it up,  
 These folds o'er my breast,  
 Robes cruelly mangled,  
 Victims of my joyless task.

For thrilling Fear with lifted hair,  
 Prophetic to the house in dreams, and breathing wrath  
 From sleep, at dead of night with panic outcry  
 Uttered a shriek from the inner recess,  
 A fierce wail, bursting on the chamber where the women  
 And they who read this dream declared, [slept.  
 Pledging a verity by heaven revealed,  
 That ghosts underground,  
 Souls wrathfully plaintive,  
 Still against their slayers raged.

To avert such horror, the impious woman who sends  
 (Alas, Earth, Mother!) [me forth,  
 Plans a vain appeasement  
 That can ne'er appease. But I  
 Fear to speak the words she bade.  
 For what redemption can there be for blood once  
 Woe for this miserable hearth! [spilt?  
 Woe for this house to ruin doomed!  
 A sunless gloom, abhorred of men,  
 A shroud of hate broods o'er a house  
 Death-bereaved of its master.

That venerable, resistless, invincible majesty,  
 That once found a way through  
 The ears and hearts of all men,

ὄνυχος ἄλοκι νεοτόμῳ,  
 δι' αἰῶνος δ' ἰνυμοῖσι βόσκεται κέαρ.

λίνοφθόροι δ' ὑφασμάτων  
 λακίδες ἔφλαδον ὑπ' ἄλγεσιν, <sup>(11.)</sup> 25

πρόσστερνοι στολμοὶ  
 πέπλων ἀγελάστοις  
 ξυμφοραῖς πεπληγμένων.

τορὸς γὰρ ὀρθόθριξ φόβος, [ἀντ. α.

δόμων ὄνειρόμαντις, ἐξ ὕπνου κότον 30

πνέων, ἀωρόνυκτον ἀμβόαμα

μυχόθεν ἔλακε περὶ φόβῳ,

γυναικείοισιν ἐν δώμασιν βαρὺς πίτνων.

κριταὶ τε τῶνδ' ὄνειράτων

θεόθεν ἔλακον ὑπέγγυοι 35

μέμφεσθαι τοὺς γᾶς

νέρθεν περιθύμως

τοῖς κτανούσιν τ' ἐγκοτεῖν.

τοιῶνδε χάριν ἀχάριτον ἀπότροπον κακῶν, [στρ. β.

ἰὼ γαῖα μαῖα, 40

μωμένα μ' ἰάλλει

δύσθεος γυνά. φοβοῦ-

μαι δ' ἔπος τόδ' ἐκβαλεῖν.

τί γὰρ λύτρον πεσόντος αἵματος πέδοι; 45

ἰὼ πάνοιζυς ἐστία,

ἰὼ κατασκαφαὶ δόμων.

ἀνήλιοι βροτοστυγεῖς

δνόφοι καλύπτουσι δόμους

δεσποτῶν θανάτοισι. 50

σέβας δ' ἄμαχον ἀδάματον ἀπόλεμον τὸ πρὶν [ἀντ. β.

δι' ὧτων φρενός τε

δαμίας περαῖνον

Now has fallen away. 'Tis Fear  
 Reigns instead. Prosperity—  
 That among mortals is a god, and more than god.  
 But Justice, watching with her scale,  
 On some by daylight swiftly swoops,  
 Or in the borderland of dark  
 Her lingering wrath ripening bides:  
 Others utterly the night whelms.

## ELECTRA

Maidens, who serve our house and give it order,  
 While I pour forth these funeral offerings,  
 How must I speak, how pray, to appease my sire?  
 Shall I say that I bring a gift of love  
 From wife to loving husband—from my mother?  
 Nay, that I dare not. I know not what to say.

*Ch.* While you pour, utter blessings for the loyal.

*El.* To whom shall I give that name among our friends?

*Ch.* First to thyself, and all who hate Aegisthus.

*El.* For myself must I pray then, and for thee?

*Ch.* You know the truth: 'tis yours now to decide.

*El.* Whom else then to this company should I add?

*Ch.* Remember Orestes, banished though he be.

*El.* 'Tis well said. Wisely have you admonished me.

*Ch.* Next, mindful of those guilty of that bloodshed—

*El.* Well, what? Direct me: instruct my ignorance.

*Ch.* Pray that upon them come some god or mortal—

*El.* To judge or to avenge? Which do you mean?

*Ch.* Say simply this: "one to take life for life."

*El.* Is that a holy prayer for me to utter?

*Ch.* Why not?—to requite foes with injury!

*El.* Mighty Herald between worlds above and under,  
 Aid me, O nether Hermes, summoning

νῦν ἀφίσταται. φοβεί- 55  
 ται δέ τις. τὸ δ' εὐτυχεῖν  
 τὸδ' ἐν βροτοῖς θεός τε καὶ θεοῦ πλέου.  
 ῥοπή δ' ἐπισκοπεῖ δίκας  
 ταχεῖα τοὺς μὲν ἐν φάει,  
 τὰ δ' ἐν μεταιχιμῶ σκότου 60  
 μένει χρονίζοντι βρῦει,  
 τοὺς δ' ἄκρατος ἔχει νύξ.

## ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

δμῶαί γυναικες, δωμάτων εὐθήμονες,  
 τί φῶ χέουσα τάσδε κηδείους χοάς ;  
 πῶς εὐφρον' εἶπω, πῶς κατεύξωμαι πατρί ; 65  
 πότερα λέγουσα παρὰ φίλης φίλῳ φέρειν  
 γυναικὸς ἀνδρί, τῆς ἐμῆς μητρὸς πάρα ;  
 τῶνδ' οὐ πάρεστι θάρσος, οὐδ' ἔχω τί φῶ.  
 Χο. φθέγγου χέουσα κεδνὰ τοῖσιν εὐφροσιν.  
 Ηλ. τίνας δὲ τούτους τῶν φίλων προσεννέπω ; 70  
 Χο. πρῶτον μὲν αὐτὴν χῶστις Αἴγισθον στυγεῖ.  
 Ηλ. ἐμοί τε καὶ σοί τᾶρ' ἐπεύξωμαι τάδε ;  
 Χο. αὐτὴ σὺ ταῦτα μανθάνουσ' ἤδη φράσαι.  
 Ηλ. τί ν' οὖν ἔτ' ἄλλον τῆδε προστιθῶ στάσει ;  
 Χο. μέμνησ' Ὀρέστου, κεῖ θυραῖός ἐσθ' ὅμως. 75  
 Ηλ. εὐ τοῦτο, κάφρένωσας οὐχ ἠκιστά με.  
 Χο. τοῖς αἰτίοις νυν τοῦ φόνου μεμνημένη  
 Ηλ. τί φῶ ; δίδασκ' ἄπειρον ἐξηγουμένη.  
 Χο. ἐλθεῖν τιν' αὐτοῖς δαίμον' ἢ βροτῶν τινα  
 Ηλ. πότερα δικαστὴν ἢ δικηφόρον λέγεις ; 80  
 Χο. ἀπλῶς τι φράζουσ', ὅστις ἀνταποκτενεῖ.  
 Ηλ. καὶ ταῦτά μουστὶν εὐσεβῆ θεῶν πάρα ;  
 Χο. πῶς δ' οὐ τὸν ἐχθρὸν ἀνταμείβεσθαι κακοῖς ;  
 Ηλ. κῆρυξ μέγιστε τῶν ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω,  
 ἄρηξον, Ἐρμῆ χθόνιε, κηρύξας ἐμοί, 85

The powers beneath the earth to hear my prayers  
Uttered for wrongs done to a father's home.

Pouring this lustral water to dead men,

I call upon my sire: Have pity on me.

With dear Orestes kindle thy dark halls.

And for me grant that I prove chaster far

Than was my mother, more innocent my hand.

For us these prayers. But for our adversaries

One to avenge thee, father, I bid rise,

And that thy slayers justly in turn be slain.

*Or.* Tell the Gods that thy prayers have been fulfilled,  
And pray hereafter for like good success.

*El.* Why, for what boon have I to thank them now?

*Or.* The sight of that for which thou hast prayed so long.

*El.* Whom canst thou know that I was summoning?

*Or.* Whom but Orestes, the idol of thy soul?

*El.* And what proof have I that my prayers are answered?

*Or.* Here am I. Seek no nearer friend than me.

*El.* O Sir, is this some snare you are weaving round me?

*Or.* Against myself then am I framing it.

*El.* I see you wish to mock at my afflictions.

*Or.* Then at my own too, if indeed at thine.

*El.* As if thou wert Orestes then I bid thee....

*Or.* Nay, 'tis himself thou seest and wilt not know.

*El.* O thou sweet eye, glancing for me with love  
Fourfold! To thee must needs be given the name

Of father: to thee falls the love I owe

To a mother—mine has merited utmost hate—

And to a sister, cruelly sacrificed.

Proved now a brother true, I reverence thee.

Only may Power and Justice, and with these

Zeus, mightiest of all, be on thy side.



- τοὺς γῆς ἔνερθε δαίμονας κλύειν ἐμὰς  
 εὐχὰς, πατρώων δωμάτων ἐπισκόπους.  
 καὶ γὼ χέουσα τάσδε χέρνιβας βροτοῖς  
 λέγω καλοῦσα πατέρ', 'ἐποίκτειρόν τ' ἐμὲ  
 φίλον τ' Ὀρέστην φῶς ἀναψον ἐν δόμοις. 90  
 αὐτῇ τέ μοι δὸς σωφρονεστέραν πολὺν  
 μητρὸς γενέσθαι χεῖρά τ' εὐσεβεστέραν.  
 ἡμῖν μὲν εὐχὰς τάσδε, τοῖς δ' ἐναντίοις  
 λέγω φανῆναί σου, πάτερ, τιμάορον,  
 καὶ τοὺς κτανόντας ἀντικαθθανεῖν δίκη. 95
- Ορ. εὐχου τὰ λοιπά, τοῖς θεοῖς τελεσφόρους  
 εὐχὰς ἐπαγγέλλουσα, τυγχάνειν καλῶς.
- Ηλ. ἐπεὶ τί νῦν ἕκατι δαιμόνων κυρῶ;
- Ορ. εἰς ὄψιν ἤκεις ὦνπερ ἐξηύχου πάλαι.
- Ηλ. καὶ τίνα σύνοιθά μοι καλουμένη βροτῶν; 100
- Ορ. σύνοιδ' Ὀρέστην πολλά σ' ἐκπαγλουμένην.
- Ηλ. καὶ πρὸς τί δῆτα τυγχάνω κατευγμάτων;
- Ορ. ὄδ' εἰμί· μὴ μάτευ' ἐμοῦ μᾶλλον φίλον.
- Ηλ. ἀλλ' ἢ δόλον τιν', ὦ ξέν', ἀμφὶ μοι πλέκεις;
- Ορ. αὐτὸς καθ' αὐτοῦ τᾶρα μηχανορραφῶ. 105
- Ηλ. ἀλλ' ἐν κακοῖσι τοῖς ἐμοῖς γελᾶν θέλεις.
- Ορ. κὰν τοῖς ἐμοῖς ἄρ', εἴπερ ἐν γε τοῖσι σοῖς.
- Ηλ. ὡς ὄντ' Ὀρέστην τᾶρ' ἐγὼ σε προϋννέπω;
- Ορ. αὐτὸν μὲν οὖν ὀρώσα δυσμαθεῖς ἐμέ.
- Ηλ. ὦ τερπνὸν ὄμμα τέσσαρας μοίρας ἔχον 110  
 ἐμοί· προσαυδᾶν δ' ἔστ' ἀναγκαίως ἔχον  
 πατέρα τε, καὶ τὸ μητρὸς ἐς σέ μοι ῥέπει  
 στέργηθρον· ἡ δὲ πανδίκως ἐχθαίρεται·  
 καὶ τῆς τυθείσης νηλεῶς ὄμοσπόρου·  
 πιστὸς δ' ἀδελφὸς ἦσθ', ἐμοὶ σέβας φέρων· 115  
 μόνον Κράτος τε καὶ Δίκη σὺν τῷ τρίτῳ  
 πάντων μεγίστῳ Ζηνὶ συγγένοιτό σοι.

*Or.* Zeus, Zeus, look down; witness what here is done.

Behold this orphan brood of an eagle sire  
That perished in the twines and writhing coils  
Of a fell viper. Fatherless are they, gripped  
By hungry want, for strength is not yet theirs  
To bring home to the nest their father's prey.  
Like them mayst thou behold me; and her too,  
Electra, children fatherless and forlorn,  
Both suffering the same exile from our home.

*Ch.* O children, saviours of the ancestral hearth,  
Silence, I pray, lest someone overhear,  
And to ease a babbling tongue report all this  
To those that rule. Ah may I one day watch  
Their corpses in the spluttering resinous flame!

*Or.* Never shall Loxias' mighty oracle  
Betray us. He it was who bade me endure  
This peril, threatening oft with voice uplifted  
Woes to make cold as winter my warm heart,  
If I avenged not those that slew my sire.  
The wrath rising from earth of hostile powers  
His voice proclaimed to men, citing such plagues  
As leprous ulcers crawling o'er the flesh,  
Eating its health away with cruel jaws:  
And how upon this plague a white down grows.  
Yet other onslaughts of the avenging fiends  
Sprang from a father's blood, so he foretold:  
For the unseen weapon of the nether powers,  
Stirred by slain kinsmen calling for revenge,  
Frenzy and causeless terror of the night,  
Perturb and harass; till by the brazen scourge  
His marred carcass is chased forth from the town.  
At last without rites, without friends, he dies,

- Ορ. Ζεῦ Ζεῦ, θεωρὸς τῶνδε πραγμάτων γενοῦ·  
 ἰδοῦ δὲ γένναν εὖνιν αἰετοῦ πατρός,  
 θανόντος ἐν πλεκταῖσι καὶ σπειράμασι 120  
 δεινῆς ἐχίδνης. τοὺς δ' ἀπωρφανισμένους  
 νῆστις πιέζει λιμός· οὐ γὰρ ἐντελεῖς  
 θήραν πατρώαν προσφέρειν σκηνήμασιν.  
 οὕτω δὲ κάμῃ τήνδε τ', Ἥλέκτραν λέγω,  
 ἰδεῖν πάρεστί σοι, πατροστερηῆ γόνου, 125  
 ἄμφω φυγῆν ἔχοντε τὴν αὐτὴν δόμων.
- Χο. ὦ παῖδες, ὦ σωτήρες ἐστίας πατρός,  
 σιγᾶθ', ὅπως μὴ πεύσεταιί τις, ὦ τέκνα,  
 γλώσσης χάριν δὲ πάντ' ἀπαγγεῖλή τάδε 130  
 πρὸς τοὺς κρατοῦντας· οὓς ἴδοιμ' ἐγὼ ποτε  
 θανόντας ἐν κηκίδι πισσῆρει φλογός.
- Ορ. οὗτοι προδώσει Λοξίου μεγασθενῆς  
 χρησμὸς κελεύων τόνδε κίνδυνον περᾶν,  
 κάξορθιάζων πολλὰ καὶ δυσχειμέρους 135  
 ἄτας ὑφ' ἠπαρ θερμὸν ἐξαυδώμενος,  
 εἰ μὴ μέτειμι τοῦ πατρός τοὺς αἰτίους·  
 τὰ μὲν γὰρ ἐκ γῆς δυσφρόνων μηνίματα  
 βροτοῖς πιφαύσκων εἶπε, τάσδ' αἰνῶν νόσους—  
 σαρκῶν ἐπαμβατῆρας ἀγρίαις γνάθοις  
 λειχῆνας ἐξέσθοντας ἀρχαίαν φύσιν, 140  
 λευκὰς δὲ κόρσας τῆδ' ἐπαντέλλειν νόσῳ·  
 ἄλλας τ' ἐφώνει προσβολὰς Ἐρινύων  
 ἐκ τῶν πατρώων αἱμάτων τελουμένας·  
 τὸ γὰρ σκοτεινὸν τῶν ἐνερτέρων βέλος  
 ἐκ προστροπαίων ἐν γένει πεπτωκότων, 145  
 καὶ λύσσα καὶ μάταιος ἐκ νυκτῶν φόβος  
 κινεῖ, ταρασσει, καὶ διώκεσθαι πόλεως  
 χαλκηλάτῳ πλάστιγγι λυμανθὲν δέμας,  
 πάντων δ' ἄτιμον κάφιλον θνήσκειν χρόνῳ

Utterly wasted to a vile mummied corpse.  
 Should I not trust such oracles as these?  
 Though I trust them not, the deed must yet be done.

*Ch.* O powerful Fates, let Zeus now send  
 Prosperous fortune  
 Unto us whom righteousness aideth.  
 "Enmity of tongue for enmity of tongue  
 Be paid in requital," cries Justice aloud,  
 Exacting the debt that is owed her.  
 "Murderous blow for murderous blow  
 Let him take for his payment." "To the deed its  
 So speaks immemorial wisdom. [reward,"

*Or.* Father, O father of woe, what word  
 Am I to speak, or what do  
 To waft this message afar to thee,  
 Where in the grave thou couchest?  
 As darkness and light are sundered,  
 Loving rites cannot reach thee,  
 The dirge chanted of old to praise  
 Kings of the house of Atreus.

*Ch.* My son, the ravening jaw  
 Of fire subdues not wholly  
 The spirit of him who is dead.  
 Someday his mood he revealeth.  
 When the slain man is bewailed, then  
 Is the injurer discovered.  
 And a rightful lamentation  
 For a parent hunts and ranges  
 With wide search, till the guilt is tracked down.

*El.* Hear then, O father, as we in turn  
 Utter our tearful anguish.

- κακῶς ταριχευθέντα παμφθάρτῳ μόρφ.  
 τοιοῖσδε χρησμοῖς ἄρα χρή πεποιθέναι;  
 κεί μὴ πέποιθα, τοῦργον ἔστ' ἐργαστέον. 150
- Χο. ἀλλ' ὦ μεγάλαι Μοῖραι, Διόθεν  
 τῆδε τελευτᾶν,  
 ἢ τὸ δίκαιον μεταβαίνει. 155  
 'ἀντὶ μὲν ἐχθρᾶς γλώσσης ἐχθρὰ  
 γλώσσα τελείσθω' τοῦφειλόμενον  
 πράσσουσα Δίκη μέγ' αὐτεῖ·  
 'ἀντὶ δὲ πληγῆς φουίας φουίαν  
 πληγὴν τινέτω.' 'δράσαντι παθεῖν,' 160  
 τριγέρων μῦθος τάδε φωνεῖ.
- Ορ. ὦ πάτερ αἰνοπαθές, τί σοι  
 φάμενος ἢ τί ῥέξας  
 τύχοιμ' ἄγκαθεν οὐρίσας,  
 ἔνθα σ' ἔχουσιν εὐναί;  
 σκότῳ φάος ἀντίμοι- 165  
 ρον· χάριτες δ' ὁμοίως  
 κέκληνται γόος εὐκλεῆς  
 προσθοδόμοις Ἀτρείδαις.
- Χο. τέκνον, φρόνημα τοῦ  
 θανόντος οὐ δαμάζει  
 πυρὸς μαλερὰ γνάθος,  
 φαίνει δ' ὕστερον ὀργάς·  
 ὀτοτύζεται δ' ὁ θνήσκων,  
 ἀναφαίνεται δ' ὁ βλάπτων. 175  
 πατέρων τε καὶ τεκόντων  
 γόος ἔνδικος ματεύει  
 τὸ πᾶν ἀμφιλαφῆς ταραχθεῖς.
- Ηλ. κλύθι νυν, ὦ πάτερ, ἐν μέρει  
 πολυδάκρυτα πένθη. 180

Thy two children are we whose dirge  
 Wails for thee o'er thy grave-mound.  
 The suppliant and the exile  
 To thy tomb we draw near.  
 What here is well? What is free from woe?  
 Vain with our doom to wrestle.

*Ch.* I beat my breast to an Arian dirge, and in the mode  
 Of Kissian wailing-women slaves, [hands  
 With clutching and bespattering strokes behold my  
 In quick succession uplifted higher and higher still  
 To fall in battering blows, until my miserable  
 Belaboured head resounds beneath the cruel shock.

*El.* Oh fie on thee! Cruel fiend!  
 Thou wicked mother! Cruel was that funeral.  
 Without kinsfolk, him, a king,  
 Without lament, unbewailed,  
 Thou hadst the heart so to inter a husband.

*Or.* No rites at all! Was it so then? Oh shame!  
 Nay verily, for my father's shaming  
 By help of heaven she shall pay,  
 By help of these hands of mine.  
 And then, when I have slain her, let me perish.

*Ch.* This also know, his limbs were lopped and mangled.  
 'Twas her design, hers who so could bury him,  
 To make his death such that thou  
 Shouldst not endure still to live.  
 Thou now hast heard how thy sire was outraged.

*Or.* On thee I call; father, stand beside thine own.

*El.* And I to his, all in tears, would add my voice.

*Ch.* And we too all cry aloud with one accord:

δίπαις τοί σ' ἐπιτύμβιος  
 θρήνος ἀναστενάζει.  
 τάφος δ' ἰκέτας δέδεκται  
 φυγάδας θ' ὁμοίως.  
 τί τῶνδ' εὖ, τί δ' ἄτερ κακῶν; 185  
 οὐκ ἀτρίακτος ἄτα;

Χο. ἔκοψα κομμὸν Ἄριον ἔν τε Κισσίας  
 νόμοις ἰηλεμιστρίας,  
 ἀπριγκτόπληκτα πολυπάλακτα δ' ἦν ἰδεῖν 190  
 ἐπασσυτεροτριβῆ τὰ χερὸς ὀρέγματα  
 ἄνωθεν ἀνέκαθεν, κτύπῳ δ' ἐπιρροθεῖ  
 κροτητὸν ἀμὸν πανάθλιον κάρα.

Ηλ. ἰὼ ἰὼ δαῖτα  
 πάντολμε μᾶτερ, δαίταις ἐν ἐκφοραῖς  
 ἄνευ πολιτῶν ἄνακτ', 195  
 ἄνευ δὲ πενθημάτων  
 ἔτλας ἀνοίμωκτον ἄνδρα θάψαι.

Ορ. ταφὰς ἀτίμους ἔλεξας, οἴμοι;  
 πατρὸς δ' ἀτίμωσιν ἄρα τίσει  
 ἕκατι μὲν δαιμόνων, 200  
 ἕκατι δ' ἀμῶν χερῶν.  
 ἔπειτ' ἐγὼ νοσφίσας ὀλοίμαν.

Χο. ἐμασχαλίσθη δέ γ', ὡς τόδ' εἰδῆς,  
 ἔπρασσε δ' ἄπερ νιν ὧδε θάπτει,  
 μόρον κτίσαι μωμένα 205  
 ἄφερτον αἰῶνι σφῶ.  
 κλύεις πατρῶους δύας ἀτίμους.

Ορ. σέ τοι λέγω, ξυγγενοῦ, πάτερ, φίλοις.

Ηλ. ἐγὼ δ' ἐπιφθέγγομαι κεκλαυμένα.

Χο. στάσις δὲ πάγκοινος ἄδ' ἐπιρροθεῖ. 210

*Or. El. Ch.* Oh hearken; visit thou the light:  
Aid us against our foes' hate.

*Or.* Let sword with sword, right encountering meet with  
right.

*El.* Ye deities, judge the right with righteousness.

*Ch.* A shudder steals o'er me, as I hear such prayers.

*Or. El. Ch.* Though destiny hath bided long,  
Yet shall your prayer reveal it.

*Or.* O father, who wast so unkingly slain,  
Grant, I implore thee, lordship in thy house.

*El.* A like boon, father, do I ask of thee:  
Let me escape, and let Aegisthus perish.

*Or.* O Earth, release my sire to guide me in fight.

*El.* O Persephassa, grant fair victory.

*Or.* Remember the bath wherewith they slew thee, father.

*El.* Remember what strange cloak-net they devised.

*Or.* In fetters no smith forged thou wast snared, father.

*El.* Yes, in a wrapping plotted for thy shame.

*Or.* Art thou not wakened by these tauntings, father?

*El.* Dost thou not lift up thy beloved head?

*Or.* Either send Justice to fight beside thine own,  
Or grant us the like grip of them in turn,  
If thou by victory wouldst retrieve defeat.

*El.* Hearken once more to this last cry, father.  
Behold these nestlings crouching at thy tomb,  
And pity us both, thy daughter and thy son.

*Or.* And blot not out this seed of Pelops' line:  
For thus, though thou hast died, thou art not dead.

*Ch.* Come, amply have you lengthened out your dirge,  
Due tribute to the tomb's unwept dishonour.  
For the rest, since now thy heart is set on deeds,  
Get thee to work forthwith, and test thy fortune.



- Ορ. Ηλ. Χο. ἄκουσον ἐς φάος μολών,  
ξὺν δὲ γενοῦ πρὸς ἐχθρούς.
- Ορ. Ἄρης Ἄρει ξυμβαλεῖ, Δίκη Δίκα.  
Ηλ. ἰὼ θεοί, κραίνειτ' ἐνδίκως δίκας.  
Χο. τρόμος μ' ὑφέρπει κλύουσας εὐγμάτων. 215  
Ορ. Ηλ. Χο. τὸ μόρσιμον μένει πάλαι,  
εὐχομένοις δ' ἂν ἔλθοι.
- Ορ. πάτερ, τρόποισιν οὐ τυραννικοῖς θανών,  
αἰτουμένω μοι δὸς κράτος τῶν σῶν δόμων.  
Ηλ. κἀγὼ, πάτερ, τοιάνδε σου χρείαν ἔχω, 220  
οἰκεῖν μετ' ἀνδρὸς θείσαν Αἰγίσθω μόρον.  
Ορ. ὦ γαί', ἄνες μοι πατέρ' ἐποπτεῦσαι μάχην.  
Ηλ. ὦ Περσέφασσα, δὸς δέ γ' εὐμορφον κράτος.  
Ορ. μέμνησο λουτρῶν οἷς ἐνοσφίσθης, πάτερ.  
Ηλ. μέμνησο δ' ἀμφίβληστρον ὡς ἐκαίνισας— 225  
Ορ. πέδαις γ' ἀχαλκεύτοισι θηρευθεῖς, πάτερ,—  
Ηλ. αἰσχρῶς τε βουλευτοῖσιν ἐν καλύμμασιν.  
Ορ. ἄρ' ἐξεγείρει τοῖσδ' ὄνειδεσιν, πάτερ;  
Ηλ. ἄρ' ὀρθὸν αἴρεις φίλτατον τὸ σὸν κᾶρα;  
Ορ. ἦτοι δίκην ἴαλλε σύμμαχον φίλοις, 230  
ἦ τὰς ὁμοίας ἀντίδος λαβὰς λαβεῖν,  
εἴπερ κρατηθεῖς γ' ἀντινικήσαι θέλεις.  
Ηλ. καὶ τῆσδ' ἄκουσον λοισθίου βοῆς, πάτερ,  
ιδῶν νεοσσούς τούσδ' ἐφημένους τάφω·  
οἴκτειρε θῆλυν ἄρσενός θ' ὁμοῦ γόον. 235  
Ορ. καὶ μὴ ἔξαλείψῃς σπέρμα Πελοπιδῶν τόδε.  
οὕτω γὰρ οὐ τέθνηκας οὐδέ περ θανών.  
Χο. καὶ μὴν ἀμεμφῆ τόνδ' ἐτεινάτην λόγον,  
τίμημα τύμβου τῆς ἀνοιμώκτου τύχης.  
τὰ δ' ἄλλ', ἐπειδὴ δρᾶν κατώρθωσαι φρενί, 240  
ἔρδοις ἂν ἤδη δαίμονος πειρώμενος.

*Or.* That will I. Yet first it were well to enquire,  
▪ Wherefore she sent libations; what could move her  
So late to make amends for wrongs past cure?

*Ch.* I know, my son; for I was there. By dreams  
And prowling terrors of the night perturbed,  
The godless woman sent these offerings.

*Or.* And did you learn the dream? Then tell it me.

*Ch.* She gave birth in her dream to a snake, she says,  
And couched it like a babe in swaddling bands.

*Or.* For what food did it crave, this new-born monster?

*Ch.* She offered it her own breast in her dream,  
And with the milk it sucked a curd of blood.  
Then she awoke from sleep shrieking for terror;  
And many a lamp, whose light the dark had blinded,  
Flared up throughout the house at the queen's need.  
Therefore these pious offerings she sends,  
In hope to lance and cure the mischief so.

*Or.* Now to this earth and to my father's grave  
I pray that in me this dream may be fulfilled.  
She who thus nursed so dread a prodigy  
Must die by force, and I, enserpented,  
Shall be her slayer, as this dream foretells.

*Ch.* I accept thy divination of these signs.  
So may it prove. Teach now thy friends their part,  
Telling what each should do or should not do.

*Or.* 'Tis simple. Let Electra go within.  
These women I bid keep concealed my plan.  
Then as by craft they slew a noble prince,  
By craft they shall be caught in the same noose,  
And perish, even as Loxias foretold.  
For like a traveller, and in full disguise,  
To the main gate will I come with Pylades here,

- Ορ. ἔσται· πυθέσθαι δ' οὐδέν ἐστ' ἔξω δρόμου,  
 πόθεν χοὰς ἔπεμψεν, ἐκ τίνος λόγου  
 μεθύστερον τιμῶσ' ἀνήκεστον πάθος;
- Χο. οἶδ', ὦ τέκνον, παρῆ γάρ· ἐκ τ' ὄνειράτων 245  
 καὶ νυκτιπλάγκτων δειμάτων πεπαλμένη  
 χοὰς ἔπεμψε τάσδε δύσθεος γυνή.
- Ορ. ἦ καὶ πέπυσθε τοῦναρ, ὥστ' ὀρθῶς φράσαι;
- Χο. τεκεῖν δράκοντ' ἔδοξεν, ὡς αὐτὴ λέγει.  
 καὶ σπαργάνοισι παιδὸς ὀρμίσαι δίκην. 250
- Ορ. τίνος βορᾶς χρῆζοντα, νεογενὲς δάκος;
- Χο. αὐτὴ προσέσχε μαζὸν ἐν τῶνειρατι  
 ὥστ' ἐν γάλακτι θρόμβον αἵματος σπάσαι.  
 ἢ δ' ἐξ ὕπνου κέκραγεν ἐπτοημένη.  
 πολλοὶ δ' ἀνήθον, ἐκτυφλωθέντες σκότῳ, 255  
 λαμπτήρες ἐν δόμοισι δεσποίνης χάριν·  
 πέμπει τ' ἔπειτα τάσδε κηδείους χοὰς,  
 ἄκος τομαῖον ἐλπίσασα πημάτων.
- Ορ. ἀλλ' εὐχομαι γῆ τῆδε καὶ πατρὸς τάφῳ  
 τοῦνειρον εἶναι τοῦτ' ἐμοὶ τελεσφόρον. 260  
 δεῖ τοί νιν, ὡς ἔθρεψεν ἔκπαυλον τέρας,  
 θανεῖν βιαίως· ἐκδρακοντωθεὶς δ' ἐγὼ  
 κτείνω νιν, ὡς τοῦνειρον ἐννέπει τόδε.
- Χο. τερασκόπον δὴ τῶνδέ σ' αἰρούμαι πέρι.  
 γένοιτο δ' οὕτως. τᾶλλα δ' ἐξηγοῦ φίλοις, 265  
 τοὺς μὲν τι ποιεῖν, τοὺς δὲ μὴ τι δρᾶν λέγω.
- Ορ. ἀπλοῦς ὁ μῦθος· τήνδε μὲν στείχειν ἔσω,  
 αἰνῶ δὲ κρύπτειν τάσδε συνθήκας ἐμάς,  
 ὡς ἂν δόλῳ κτείναντες ἄνδρα τίμιον  
 δόλοισι καὶ ληφθῶσιν ἐν ταύτῳ βρόχῳ 270  
 θανόντες, ἧ καὶ Λοξίας ἐφήμισεν.  
 ξένῳ γὰρ εἰκῶς, παντελεῆ σαγῆν ἔχων,  
 ἦξω σὺν ἀνδρὶ τῷδ' ἐφ' ἐρκείους πύλας

A guest to the house, aye and its spear-guest too.

And both of us will don Parnassian speech,

Copying the accent of a Phocian tongue.

Then once I have crossed the threshold of the court,

And found *him* seated in my father's throne,

Or if afterwards he meet me face to face

And speak—dropping his craven eyes, be sure—

Ere he can say, “Whence comes this stranger?” dead,

Snared by my nimble weapon, will I smite him.

The Avenging Spirit, stinted ne'er of slaughter,

Shall drink in blood unmixed her third last draught.

Do thou then keep good watch within the house.

And you, I charge you, bear a cautious tongue

For speech or silence as the moment needs.

Last thou, friend, follow me and stand at watch

To succour me in the contest of the sword.

Ho, slave! open the gates! You hear me knock.

Is any there within doors?—Ho, slave, ho!

GATE-KEEPER

Enough! I hear. Of what land are you? Whence?

*Or.* Announce me to the masters of the house.

The tidings I come bringing are for them.

And make haste; for night's dusky chariot

Comes on apace. 'Tis time we travellers found

Some public guest-house to cast anchor in.

CLYTAEMNESTRA

Friends, speak your wishes. At your service here

Are all such comforts as beseem this house,

Warm baths, and to refresh your weariness,

Soft couches, and true eyes to attend your wants.

But if you have affairs of weightier counsel,

That is work for men, to whom we will impart it.

Πυλάδῃ· ξένος δὲ καὶ δορυξενος δόμων·  
 ἄμφω δὲ φωνὴν ἤσομεν Παρνησίδα, 275  
 γλώσσης αὐτὴν Φωκίδος· μιμουμένω.  
 εἰ δ' οὖν ἀμείψω βαλὸν ἐρκείων πυλῶν  
 κἀκείνον ἐν θρόνοισιν εὐρήσω πατρός,  
 ἢ καὶ μολῶν ἔπειτά μοι κατὰ στόμα  
 ἐρεῖ, σάφ' ἴσθι, καὶ κατ' ὀφθαλμούς βαλεῖ, 280  
 πρὶν αὐτὸν εἰπεῖν ἄποδαπὸς ὁ ξένος; νεκρὸν  
 θήσω, ποδώκει περιβαλὼν χαλκεύματι.  
 φόνου δ' Ἐρινύς οὐχ ὑπεσπανισμένη  
 ἄκρατον αἶμα πίεται τρίτην πόσιν.  
 νῦν οὖν σὺ μὲν φύλασσε τὰν οἴκῳ καλῶς, 285  
 ὑμῖν δ' ἐπαινώ γλώσσαν εὐφήμον φέρειν,  
 σιγᾶν θ' ὅπου δεῖ καὶ λέγειν τὰ καίρια.  
 τὰ δ' ἄλλα τούτῳ δεῦρ' ἐποπτεῦσαι λέγω,  
 ξιφηφόρους ἀγῶνας ὀρθώσαντί μοι.  
 παῖ παῖ, θύρας ἄκουσον ἐρκείας κτύπον. 290  
 τίς ἔνδον, ὦ παῖ—παῖ, μάλ' αὖ, τίς ἐν δόμοις;

## ΟΙΚΕΤΗΣ

εἶεν, ἀκουῶ· ποδαπὸς ὁ ξένος; πόθεν;  
 Ορ. ἀγγελλε τοῖσι κυρίοισι δωμάτων,  
 πρὸς οὓσπερ ἤκω καὶ φέρω καινοὺς λόγους.  
 τάχυνε δ', ὡς καὶ νυκτὸς ἄρμ' ἐπείγεται 295  
 σκοτεινόν, ὥρα δ' ἐμπόρους καθιέναι  
 ἀγκυραν ἐν δόμοισι πανδόκοις ξένων.

## ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

ξένοι, λέγοιτ' ἂν εἴ τι δεῖ· πάρεστι γὰρ  
 ὁποῖάπερ δόμοισι τοῖσδ' ἐπεικότα,  
 καὶ θερμὰ λουτρά καὶ πόνων θελκτῆριος 300  
 στρωμνὴ, δικαίων τ' ὀμμάτων παρουσία.  
 εἰ δ' ἄλλο πράξαι δεῖ τι βουλιώτερον,  
 ἀνδρῶν τόδ' ἐστὶν ἔργον, οἷς κοινώσομεν.

*Or.* I am a Daulian traveller from Phocis.

As at my own risk I was carrying goods  
 To Argos, where now my long journey ends,  
 There met me a man I knew not, nor he me,  
 Strophius, a Phocean, so I learnt in talk.  
 Having asked my way and told me his, he said:

“Since anyhow you are bound for Argos, Sir,  
 Bear heedfully in mind to tell his parents  
 That Orestes is dead. Do not forget.  
 So whether his friends resolve to fetch him home,  
 Or bury him, our denizen and guest  
 Forever, bring me their injunctions back.  
 Meanwhile the curved sides of a brazen urn  
 Enclose his ashes, in due form bewept.”

I have told my whole message. Whether now  
 I am speaking to the rulers, and his kindred,  
 I know not; but his parent should be told.

*Cl.* Ah me! we are taken ruthlessly by storm.

O thou all-conquering curse that haunts this house,  
 How wide thy vision! with sure aim thy shafts  
 Strike even that we have hidden with care afar,  
 Stripping my dear ones from me, unhappy woman!

*Or.* For my part certainly I could have wished  
 With happier tidings to commend myself  
 To hosts so princely, and earn their entertainment.

*Cl.* Nay, due reward shall none the less be thine,  
 Nor shall you find yourself less welcome here.  
 Some other would have brought this news instead.  
 But now 'tis the hour when guests, tired by the day's  
 Long journey, should be tended as befits.  
 Take him and lodge him well in the men's chambers  
 With these his fellow-travellers and attendants.

- Ορ. ξένος μὲν εἰμι Δαυλιεὺς ἐκ Φωκέων·  
 στείχοντα δ' αὐτόφορτον οἰκεία σαγῆ 305  
 εἰς Ἄργος, ὥσπερ δεῦρ' ἀπεζύγην πόδα,  
 ἀγνώως πρὸς ἀγνώτ' εἶπε συμβαλὼν ἀνὴρ,  
 ἐξιστορήσας καὶ σαφηνίσας ὁδόν,  
 Στρόφιος ὁ Φωκεύς· πεύθομαι γὰρ ἐν λόγῳ·  
 'ἐπέιπερ ἄλλως, ὦ ξέν', εἰς Ἄργος κίεις, 310  
 πρὸς τοὺς τεκόντας πανδίκως μεμνημένος  
 τεθνεώτ' Ὀρέστην εἰπέ, μηδαμῶς λάθῃ.  
 εἶτ' οὖν κομίζειν δόξα νικήσει φίλων,  
 εἶτ' οὖν μέτοικον, εἰς τὸ πᾶν ἀεὶ ξένον,  
 θάπτειν, ἐφετμὰς τάσδε πόρθμευσον πάλιν. 315  
 νῦν γὰρ λέβητος χαλκέου πλευρώματα  
 σποδὸν κέκευθεν ἀνδρὸς εὖ κεκλαυμένου.  
 τοσαύτ' ἀκούσας εἶπον. εἰ δὲ τυγχάνω  
 τοῖς κυρίοισι καὶ προσήκουσιν λέγων  
 οὐκ οἶδα, τὸν τεκόντα δ' εἰκὸς εἰδέναι. 320
- Κλ. οἱ ἄγω, κατ' ἄκρας νηλεῶς πορθούμεθα.  
 ὦ δυσπάλαιστε τῶνδε δωμάτων ἀρά,  
 ὡς πόλλ' ἐπωπᾶς κάκποδῶν εὖ κείμενα,  
 τόξοις πρόσωθεν εὐσκόποις χειρουμένη, 325  
 φίλων ἀποψιλοῖς με τὴν παναθλίαν.
- Ορ. ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν ξένοισιν ὧδ' εὐδαίμοσι  
 κεδνῶν ἕκατι πραγμάτων ἂν ἤθελον  
 γνωστὸς γενέσθαι καὶ ξενωθῆναι· τί γάρ;
- Κλ. οὗτοι κυρήσεις μείον ἀξίῳ σέθεν,  
 οὐδ' ἦσσον ἂν γένοιο δώμασιν φίλος. 330  
 ἄλλος δ' ὁμοίως ἦλθεν ἂν τάδ' ἀγγελῶν.  
 ἀλλ' ἔσθ' ὁ καιρὸς ἡμερεύοντας ξένους  
 μακρᾶς κελεύθου τυγχάνειν τὰ πρόσφορα.  
 ἄγ' αὐτὸν εἰς ἀνδρῶνας εὐξένους δόμων,  
 ὀπισθόπους τε τούσδε καὶ ξυνεμπόρους· 335

Let them receive there what beseems our house.  
 I warn you, for their comfort you must answer.  
 This news meanwhile we will impart to those  
 Who bear rule here. Having no lack of friends,  
 We will take counsel on this sad event.

*Ch.* O reverend Earth, O reverend mound,  
 Thou that beneath thee coverest the outworn  
 Dust of the armed fleet's kingly commander,  
 Deign now to hearken, deign to give succour.  
 Now is the hour when guileful Deceit  
 Must enter to aid us, and Chthonian Hermes,  
 Patron of stealth, stand sentinel over  
 This deadly encounter of sword-blades.

Our traveller, it seems, is working mischief.  
 Yonder I see Orestes' nurse in tears.  
 Where are you going, Kilissa, through the gates,  
 With grief to bear you company unhired?

#### NURSE

The mistress bids me summon Aegisthus home  
 As quick as may be, to meet these stranger guests,  
 And learn more certainly as man from man  
 This new-told rumour—while before her servants  
 Behind eyes of pretended gloom she hides  
 A laugh at work done excellently well  
 For her, but miserably for this house,  
 Hearing the tale these strangers told so plain.  
 That heart of his I warrant will be glad  
 When he has learnt their story. Wellaway!  
 All other troubles patiently I bore:  
 But dear Orestes, the babe I spent my soul on,



κακεῖ κυρούντων δώμασιν τὰ πρόσφορα.  
 αἰνώ δὲ πράσσειν ὡς ὑπευθύνῳ τάδε.  
 ἡμεῖς δὲ ταῦτα τοῖς κρατοῦσι δωμαίων  
 κοινώσομέν τε κοῦ σπανίζοντες φίλων  
 βουλευσόμεσθα τῆσδε συμφορᾶς πέρι. 340

Χο. ὦ πότνια χθῶν καὶ πότνι ἄκτῃ  
 χώματος, ἣ νῦν ἐπὶ ναυάρχῳ  
 σώματι κείσαι τῷ βασιλείῳ,  
 νῦν ἐπάκουσον, νῦν ἐπάρηξον·  
 νῦν γὰρ ἀκμάζει Πειθῶ δολίαν 345  
 ξυγκαταβῆναι, χθόνιον δ' Ἑρμῆν  
 καὶ τὸν νύχιον τοῖσδ' ἐφορεῦσαι  
 ξιφοδηλήτοισιν ἀγῶσιν.

ἔοικεν ἀνὴρ ὁ ξένος τεύχειν κακόν·  
 τροφὸν δ' Ὀρέστου τήνδ' ὀρώ κεκλαυμένην. 350  
 ποῖ δὴ πατεῖς, Κίλισσα, δωμαίων πύλας;  
 λύπη δ' ἄμισθός ἐστί σοι ξυνέμπορος.

## ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

Αἴγισθον ἣ κρατοῦσα τοῖς ξένοις καλεῖν  
 ὅπως τάχιστ' ἄνωγεν, ὡς σαφέστερον  
 ἀνὴρ ἀπ' ἀνδρὸς τὴν νεάγγελτον φάτιν 355  
 ἐλθῶν πύθηται τήνδε, πρὸς μὲν οἰκέτας  
 θετοσκυθρωπῶν ἐντὸς ὀμμάτων γέλων  
 κεύθουσ' ἐπ' ἔργοις διαπεπραγμένοις καλῶς  
 κείνη, δόμοις δὲ τοῖσδε παγκάκως ἔχει, 360  
 φήμης ὑφ' ἧς ἠγγειλαν οἱ ξένοι τορῶς.  
 ἦ δὴ κλύων ἐκεῖνος εὐφρανεῖ νόον,  
 εὐτ' ἂν πύθηται μῦθον. ὦ τάλαιν' ἐγώ·  
 τὰ μὲν γὰρ ἄλλα τλημόνως ἦντλον κακά·  
 φίλον δ' Ὀρέστην, τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς τριβήν,

Whom straight from his mother's womb I took to nurse....

And then those shrill cries summoning me by night,  
 And all those weary tasks, mere trouble wasted  
 They were: for a senseless thing one needs must nurse  
 Like a dumb beast—how else—? by humouring it.  
 The cry of a boy in swaddlings tells you nothing,  
 Whether hunger, thirst or wanting to make water  
 Grips him: a child's young body will have its way.  
 These wants I would forecast; but often, it may be,  
 Would guess wrong, and so have to cleanse his linen,  
 Laundress and nurse reckoning as one office.

Aye, these two handicrafts both fell to me,  
 When I received Orestes from his father.

Now, woe is me! I learn that he is dead.

So I must fetch the man who has brought this house  
 To ruin. Glad will he be to hear my tale.

*Ch.* Tell us, how does she bid him come arrayed?

*Nu.* "Arrayed?" Speak plain. I understand you not.

*Ch.* Whether with escort, or may be alone?

*Nu.* She bids him bring a bodyguard of spearmen.

*Ch.* Bear no such message then to our hated master,  
 But bid him come alone, that he may hear  
 Without alarm, at once, with cheerful heart.

*Nu.* Can you be looking kindly on these tidings?

*Ch.* But what if Zeus should change ill winds to fair?

*Nu.* How, when Orestes, hope of the house, is gone?

*Ch.* Not yet. A seer of small skill might know that.

*Nu.* What! Know you aught outside what has been told?

*Ch.* Go, take thy message. Do as thou wert charged.  
 That which concerns the Gods is their concern.

*Nu.* Well, I will go, following thy advice.

May it prove all for the best by the Gods' grace.

- δὴν ἐξέθρεψα μητρόθεν δεδεγμένη, — 365  
 καὶκ νυκτιπλάγκτων ὀρθίων κελευμάτων  
 καὶ πολλὰ καὶ μοχθήρ' ἀνωφέλητ' ἐμοὶ  
 τλάσῃ.—τὸ μὴ φρονοῦν γὰρ ὡσπερὶ βροτῶν  
 τρέφειν ἀνάγκη, πῶς γὰρ οὐ; τρόπῳ φρενός·  
 οὐ γάρ τι φωνεῖ παῖς ἔτ' ὢν ἐν σπαργάνοις, 370  
 ἢ λιμός, ἢ δίψ' εἴ τις, ἢ λιψουρία  
 ἔχει· νέα δὲ νηδὺς αὐτάρκης τέκνων.  
 τούτων πρόμαντις οὔσα, πολλὰ δ', οἶομαι,  
 ψευσθεῖσα, παιδὸς σπαργάνων φαιδρύντρια,  
 κναφεὺς τροφεὺς τε ταῦτ' εἰχέτην τέλος. 375  
 ἐγὼ διπλᾶς δὲ τάσδε χειρωναξίας  
 ἔχουσ' Ὀρέστην ἐξεδεξάμην πατρί·  
 τεθνηκότος δὲ νῦν τάλαινα πεύθομαι.  
 στεῖχω δ' ἐπ' ἄνδρα τῶνδε λυμανθήριον  
 οἴκῳ, θέλων δὲ τόνδε πεύσεται λόγον. 380
- Χο. πῶς οὖν κελεύει νιν μολεῖν ἐσταλμένον;  
 Τρ. τί πῶς; λέγ' αὖθις, ὡς μάθω σαφέστερον.  
 Χο. εἰ ξὺν λοχίταις εἴτε καὶ μονοστιβῆ.  
 Τρ. ἄγειν κελεύει δορυφόρους ὀπάοντας.  
 Χο. μὴ νυν σὺ ταῦτ' ἄγγελλε δεσπότης στύγει· 385  
 ἀλλ' αὐτὸν ἐλθεῖν, ὡς ἀδειμάντως κλύη,  
 ἄνωχθ' ὅσον τάχιστα γηθούση φρενί.
- Τρ. ἀλλ' ἢ φρονεῖς εὖ τοῖσι νῦν ἠγγελμένοις;  
 Χο. ἀλλ' εἰ τροπαίαν Ζεὺς κακῶν θήσει ποτέ. 390  
 Τρ. καὶ πῶς; Ὀρέστης ἐλπίς οἴχεται δόμων.  
 Χο. οὐπω· κακός γε μάντις ἂν γνοιή τάδε.  
 Τρ. τί φῆς; ἔχεις τι τῶν λελεγμένων δίχα;  
 Χο. ἄγγελλ' ἰούσα, πρᾶσσε τὰπεσταλμένα.  
 μέλει θεοῖσιν ὄνπερ ἂν μέλη πέρι. 395
- Τρ. ἀλλ' εἴμι καὶ σοῖς ταῦτα πείσομαι λόγοις.  
 γένοιτο δ' ὡς ἄριστα σὺν θεῶν δόσει.

*Ch.* O reverend Earth, O reverend mound,  
 Thou that beneath thee coverest the outworn  
 Dust of the armed fleet's kingly commander,  
 Deign now to hearken, deign to give succour.  
 Now is the hour when guileful Deceit  
 Must enter to aid us, and Chthonian Hermes,  
 Patron of stealth, stand sentinel over  
 This deadly encounter of sword-blades.

## AEGISTHUS

I am come in answer to a summoning message.  
 A strange tale has been brought, so I am told,  
 By travellers, news of no pleasant sort.  
 Orestes' death—a horror-dripping burden  
 Would that prove, were it too laid on this house  
 Already mauled and festering with past bloodshed.  
 What should I think? Is it the living truth?  
 Or else mere talk, begotten of women's fears,  
 That leaps into the air to die in smoke?  
 Can you say aught to clear my mind of doubt?

*Ch.* We heard indeed—But go in to the strangers,  
 And ask of them. No messenger so sure  
 As to enquire oneself of him who knows.

*Ae.* This messenger I must see and question further,  
 Whether he was present at the death himself;  
 Or from some phantom rumour learnt his tale.  
 Be sure they shall not cheat a clear-eyed mind.

*Ch.* Zeus, Zeus, what speech shall I find? Whence now  
 Shall begin my fervent prayer to thy Godhead?  
 How in loyal zeal  
 Give utterance due to my longing?  
 For now is the hour when either the blood-stained

- Χο. ὦ πότνια χθῶν καὶ πότνι' ἀκτῆ  
 χώματος, ἢ νῦν ἐπὶ ναυάρχῳ  
 σώματι κεῖσαι τῷ βασιλείῳ, 400  
 νῦν ἐπάκουσον, νῦν ἐπάρηξον·  
 νῦν γὰρ ἀκμάζει Πειθῶ δολίαν  
 ξυγκαταβῆναι, χθόνιον δ' Ἑρμῆν  
 καὶ τὸν νύχιον τοῖσδ' ἐφορεῦσαι  
 ξιφοδηλήτοισιν ἀγῶσιν. 405

## ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

- ἦκω μὲν οὐκ ἄκλητος, ἀλλ' ὑπάγγελος·  
 νέαν φάτιν δὲ πεύθομαι λέγειν τινὰς  
 ξένους μολόντας οὐδαμῶς ἐφίμερον,  
 μόρον δ' Ὀρέστου. καὶ τόδ' ἀμφέρειν δόμοις  
 γένοιτ' ἂν ἄχθος αἱματοσταγὲς φόνῳ 410  
 τῷ πρόσθεν ἐλκαίνουσι καὶ δεδηγμένοις.  
 πῶς ταῦτ' ἀληθῆ καὶ βλέποντα δοξάσω;  
 ἢ πρὸς γυναικῶν δειματούμενοι λόγοι  
 πεδάρσιοι θρόσκουσι, θνήσκοντος μάτην;  
 τί τῶνδ' ἂν εἴποις ὥστε δηλῶσαι φρενί; 415
- Χο. ἠκούσαμεν μὲν, πυνθάνου δὲ τῶν ξένων  
 εἴσω παρελθῶν. οὐδὲν ἀγγέλων σθένος  
 ὡς αὐτόσ' αὐτὸν ἄνδρα πεύθεσθαι πέρι.
- Αι. ἰδεῖν ἐλέγξαι τ' αὐθέρω τὸν ἄγγελου,  
 εἴτ' αὐτὸς ἦν θνήσκοντος ἐγγύθεν παρών, 420  
 εἴτ' ἐξ ἀμαυρᾶς κληδόνος λέγει μαθῶν.  
 οὔτοι φρέν' ἂν κλέψειεν ὠμματωμένην.
- Χο. Ζεῦ Ζεῦ, τί λέγω, πόθεν ἄρξωμαι  
 τάδ' ἐπενχομένη κάπιθεάζουσ',  
 ὑπὸ δ' εὐνοίας 425  
 πῶς ἴσον εἰποῦσ' ἀνύσωμαι;  
 νῦν γὰρ μέλλουσι μιανθεῖσαι

Edges of cleaving man-slaying sword-blades  
 Must utterly whelm in destruction the house  
 Of great Agamemnon for all time;  
 Or else he, kindling a fire and a light  
 For the cause of freedom and lawful rule,  
 Shall win the great wealth of his fathers.  
 Such now is the prize for which, one against two,  
 Our heaven-guided champion Orestes  
 Must wrestle. Oh yet may he conquer.

*Ae. (within).* Eh! Eh! Otototoi!

*Ch.* Ah! What is it?

How is it now? How doth Fate crown the event?  
 Stand we aside while the issue is in doubt,  
 That so we may seem blameless of these woes.  
 For 'tis by the sword the verdict must be sealed.

SERVANT

Woe is me! Utter woe! My lord is slain.  
 Woe yet once more, a third last farewell cry!  
 Aegisthus is no more. But open, open,  
 And with all speed. Unbar the women's gates.  
 Draw the bolts. And right lusty hands are needed—  
 Though not to help the dead—what use were that?  
 Ioû! Ioû!

I am shouting to the deaf and wasting words  
 On idle sleepers. Where is Clytaemnestra?  
 What doth she? Her own neck is like to fall  
 Beside the block beneath the stroke of Justice.

*Cl.* What is it now? What clamour are you raising?

*Ser.* The dead, I tell you, are murdering the living.

*Cl.* Ay me! I read the purport of your riddle.

Even as by craft we slew, so must we perish.  
 Haste, someone, give me a man-destroying axe.

πειραὶ κοπάνων ἀνδροδαίκτων  
 ἢ πάνυ θήσειν Ἀγαμεμνονίων  
 οἴκων ὄλεθρον διὰ παντός, 430  
 ἢ πῦρ καὶ φῶς ἐπ' ἐλευθερία  
 δαίων ἀρχάς τε πολισσονόμους  
 πατέρων ἦ ἔξει μέγαν ὄλβον.  
 τοιάνδε πάλην μόνος ὦν ἔφεδρος  
 δισσοῖς μέλλει θεῖος Ὀρέστης 435  
 ἄψειν. εἴη δ' ἐπὶ νίκη.

Αἰ. ἐή, ὀτοτοτοῖ.

Χο. ἔα ἔα μάλα·

πῶς ἔχει; πῶς κέκρανται δόμοις;  
 ἀποσταθῶμεν πράγματος τελουμένου, 440  
 ὅπως δοκῶμεν τῶνδ' ἀναίτιαι κακῶν  
 εἶναι· μάχης γὰρ δὴ κεκύρωται τέλος.

## ΟΙΚΕΤΣ

οἴμοι, πανοίμοι δεσπότης πεπληγμένου·  
 οἴμοι μάλ' αὖθις ἐν τρίτοις προσφθέγμασιν.  
 Αἴγισθος οὐκέτ' ἔστιν. ἀλλ' ἀνούξατε 445  
 ὅπως τάχιστα, καὶ γυναικείους πύλας  
 μοχλοῖς χαλᾶτε· καὶ μάλ' ἠβῶντος δὲ δεῖ,  
 οὐχ ὥστ' ἀρήξαι διαπεπραγμένῳ· τί γάρ;  
 ἰὸν ἰού.

κωφοῖς αὐτῷ καὶ καθεύδουσιν μάτην 450  
 ἄκραντα βάζω. ποῖ Κλυταιμῆστρα; τί δρᾷ;  
 ἔοικε νῦν αὐτῆς ἐπιξήνου πέλας  
 ἀνχὴν πεσεῖσθαι πρὸς δίκην πεπληγμένος.

Κλ. τί δ' ἐστὶ χρῆμα; τίνα βοήν ἴστης δόμοις;

Οἰ. τὸν ζῶντα καίνειν τοὺς τεθνηκότας λέγω. 455

Κλ. οἶ γῶ. ξυνήκα τοῦπος ἐξ αἰνιγμάτων.

δόλοισ ὀλούμεθ', ὥσπερ οὖν ἐκτείναμεν.  
 δαίη τις ἀνδροκμήτα πέλεκυν ὡς τάχος·

Let us know if we are conquerors or conquered.  
To such a pass this woeful way has brought me.

*Or.* 'Tis thee I seek. For him, it is enough.

*Cl.* Ah me, beloved Aegisthus! Art thou dead?

*Or.* Thou lovest the man? Why then in the same grave  
Shalt thou lie, ne'er to abandon him in death.

*Cl.* Forbear, my son. Reverence this, dear child,  
This breast at which thou oft, slumbering the while,  
Didst suck with toothless gums the fostering milk.

*Or.* How, Pylades? Should awe make me spare my  
mother?

PYLADES

Who then will heed henceforth the voice of Loxias,  
His Pythian oracles, aye and the faith of oaths?  
Rather hold all men enemies than the Gods.

*Or.* I approve thy sentence. Well dost thou exhort me.  
Come now. I mean to slay you at yon man's side.  
In his life you deemed him better than my sire;  
Sleep with him then in death; since he is the man  
You love, and him you should have loved, you hate.

*Cl.* I reared thee, and with thee would I grow old.

*Or.* My father's murderess, wouldst thou share my home?

*Cl.* Nay, child, the blame in part must lie with Fate.

*Or.* Then this doom also Fate has brought to pass.

*Cl.* Hast thou no awe, child, of a parent's curse?

*Or.* A mother's, who could cast me forth to misery.

*Cl.* To a friendly house! That was no casting forth.

*Or.* Foully was I sold, I, son of a free sire.

*Cl.* Where is the price then I received for thee?

*Or.* That taunt for shame I cannot plainly utter.

*Cl.* Nay, but speak likewise of thy father's follies.



εἰδῶμεν εἰ νικῶμεν, ἢ νικώμεθα.  
 ἔνταῦθα γὰρ δὴ τοῦδ' ἀφικόμην κακοῦ. 460

- Ορ. σὲ καὶ ματεύω· τῷδε δ' ἀρκούντως ἔχει.  
 Κλ. οἱ ἴγῳ. τέθνηκας, φίλτατ' Αἰγίσθου βία.  
 Ορ. φιλεῖς τὸν ἄνδρα; τοιγὰρ ἐν ταύτῳ τάφῳ  
 κείσει. θανόντα δ' οὔτι μὴ προδῶς ποτε.  
 Κλ. ἐπίσχεσ, ὦ παῖ, τόνδε δ' αἰδεσαι, τέκνον, 465  
 μαστόν, πρὸς ᾧ σὺ πολλὰ δὴ βρίζων ἅμα  
 οὔλοισιν ἐξήμελξας εὐτραφὲς γάλα.  
 Ορ. Πυλάδῃ, τί δράσω; μητέρ' αἰδεσθῶ κτανεῖν;

## ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

- ποῦ δὴ τὰ λοιπὰ Λοξίου μαντεύματα  
 τὰ πυθόχρηστα, πιστά τ' εὐορκώματα; 470  
 ἅπαντας ἐχθροὺς τῶν θεῶν ἠγοῦ πλέον.  
 Ορ. κρίνω σὲ νικᾶν, καὶ παραινεῖς μοι καλῶς.  
 ἔπου, πρὸς αὐτὸν τόνδε σὲ σφάξαι θέλω.  
 καὶ ζῶντα γὰρ νιν κρείσσον' ἠγήσω πατρός·  
 τούτῳ θανοῦσα ξυγκάθευδ', ἐπεὶ φιλεῖς 475  
 τὸν ἄνδρα τούτον, ὃν δ' ἐχρῆν φιλεῖν στυγεῖς.  
 Κλ. ἐγὼ σ' ἔθρεψα, σὺν δὲ γηράναι θέλω.  
 Ορ. πατροκτονοῦσα γὰρ ξυνοικήσεις ἐμοί;  
 Κλ. ἢ Μοῖρα τούτων, ὦ τέκνον, παραιτία.  
 Ορ. καὶ τόνδε τοίνυν Μοῖρ' ἐπόρσυνεν μόρον. 480  
 Κλ. οὐδὲν σεβίζει γενεθλίους ἀράς, τέκνον;  
 Ορ. τεκοῦσα γὰρ μ' ἔρριψας ἐς τὸ δυστυχές.  
 Κλ. οὔτοι σ' ἀπέρριψ' ἐς δόμους δορυξένους.  
 Ορ. αἰσχυρῶς ἐπράθην ὦν ἐλευθέρου πατρός.  
 Κλ. ποῦ δῆθ' ὁ τίμος, ὄντιν' ἀντεδεξάμην; 485  
 Ορ. αἰσχύνομαί σοι τοῦτ' ὄνειδίσαι σαφῶς.  
 Κλ. ἀλλ' εἴφ' ὁμοίως καὶ πατρὸς τοῦ σοῦ μάτας.

*Or.* Idling at home, censure not him who toils.

*Cl.* 'Tis grief for a woman, child, to lack a mate.

*Or.* Yet man's labour maintains her in idleness.

*Cl.* Thou meanest then, my child, to slay thy mother.

*Or.* 'Tis thou wilt be thine own slayer, not I.

*Cl.* Look to it! Beware the hounds of a mother's fury.

*Or.* How escape my father's, if I shirk this task?

*Cl.* Words then are vain as a dirge to a dead tomb.

*Or.* Vain, for my sire's fate brings his doom upon thee.

*Cl.* Aye me! This is the snake I bare and suckled.

*Or.* Yes, a true prophet was that dream-born terror.

You slew whom you ought not: suffer what you  
should not.

*Ch.* As upon Priam's sons punishment came at last,

Heavily fraught with doom,

So to the royal house of Agamemnon came

A twofold lion, a twofold sword;

Yea to the utmost end

The Pytho-crowned fugitive,

Sped by the voice divine, his race now has run.

Utter a cry of joy, now that our master's house

Thus hath escaped its woes, yea and the waste of

By an unclean and guilty pair— [wealth

A hard, weary road!

Now upon him who loved treacherous fight, is come  
Cunningly plotted doom.

And in the strife 'twas she guided aright his hand,

The veritable child of Zeus:

Justice the name whereby

She is called by men truthfully.

Deadly the wrath she breathes against those she hates.

- Ορ. μὴ ἄλεγε τὸν πονοῦντ' ἔσω καθημένη.  
 Κλ. ἄλλος γυναιξὶν ἀνδρὸς εἴργεσθαι, τέκνον.  
 Ορ. τρέφει δέ γ' ἀνδρὸς μόχθος ἡμένας ἔσω. 490  
 Κλ. κτενεῖν ἔοικας, ὦ τέκνον, τὴν μητέρα.  
 Ορ. σύ τοι σεαυτήν, οὐκ ἐγώ, κατακτενεῖς.  
 Κλ. ὄρα, φύλαξαι μητρὸς ἐγκότους κύνας.  
 Ορ. τὰς τοῦ πατρὸς δὲ πῶς φύγω, παρεῖς τάδε;  
 Κλ. ἔοικα θρηνεῖν ζῶσα πρὸς τύμβον μάτην. 495  
 Ορ. πατρὸς γὰρ αἷσα τόνδε σφῆριζει μόρον.  
 Κλ. οἱ ἄγω τεκοῦσα τόνδ' ὄφιν ἐθρεψάμην.  
 Ορ. ἦ κάρτα μάντις οὐξ ὄνειράτων φόβος.  
     ἔκανες ὃν οὐ χρῆν, καὶ τὸ μὴ χρεῶν πάθε.  
 Χο. ἔμολε μὲν δίκαια Πριαμίδαις χρόνῳ, 500  
     βαρύδικος ποινα·  
     ἔμολε δ' ἐς δόμον τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονος  
     διπλοῦς λέων, διπλοῦς Ἄρης.  
     ἔλασε δ' ἐς τὸ πᾶν  
     ὁ πυθόχρηστος φυγὰς 505  
     θεόθεν εὖ φραδαῖσιν ὠρμημένος.  
  
     ἐπολολύξατ' ὦ δεσποσύνων δόμων  
     ἀναφυγὰς κακῶν καὶ κτεάνων τριβᾶς  
     ὑπὸ δυοῖν μιστόροι,  
     δυσοίμου τύχας. 510  
  
     ἔμολε δ' ὧ μῆλει κρυπταδίου μάχας  
     δολιόφρων ποινα·  
     ἔθιγε δ' ἐν μάχῃ χερὸς ἐτήτυμος  
     Διὸς κόρα—Δίκαιαν δέ νιν  
     προσαγορεύομεν βροτοὶ τυχόντες καλῶς— 515  
     ὀλέθριον πνέουσ' ἐν ἐχθροῖς κότον·

Kindled is now the light: gone is the mighty curb  
Holding the house in thrall.

Up then, arise, ye halls! Grovelling on the ground  
Too long have ye been lying.

*Or.* Behold this twofold tyranny of our land,  
They that slew the father and despoiled the house.  
Stately they were once, seated on their thrones,  
And loving even now, as from their plight  
Is manifest. True to its pledge their oath still stands.  
Both swore my father's murder, and to die  
Together. That too has been faithfully kept.  
Behold too, ye that judge these deeds of woe,  
The snare wherewith my unhappy sire was bound,  
For his hands a fetter, for his feet a trap.  
Open it out, and standing round, display  
This man-enwrapping sheet, that so the Father,  
Not mine, but he whose eye sees all things here,  
The sun, may behold my mother's unclean work,  
And some day at my trial may appear  
To witness that I wrought this slaying justly,  
My mother's, (for Aegisthus' death I count not:  
His the seducer's penalty by law:)  
But she who planned this horror against her lord,  
Whose children she had borne beneath her girdle,  
That once dear burden, proved now a deadly foe,  
What think you of her? Were she sea-snake or viper,  
Her touch would rot another's flesh unbitten,  
If cruelty and wicked will could do it.  
What can I name it, speak I ne'er so mildly?  
A trap for a beast? Or else a coffin-cloth  
To wrap the feet of a corpse? Nay, 'tis a net:

πάρα τὸ φῶς ἰδεῖν. μέγα τ' ἀφηρέθη  
 ψάλιον οἰκετῶν,  
 ἄναγε μὰν δόμοι· πολὺν ἄγαν χρόνον  
 χαμαιπετεῖς ἔκεισθε. 520

Ορ. Ἴδεσθε χώρας τὴν διπλὴν τυραννίδα  
 πατροκτόνους τε δωμάτων πορθήτορας.  
 σεμνοὶ μὲν ἦσαν ἐν θρόνοις τόθ' ἤμενοι,  
 φίλοι δὲ καὶ νῦν, ὡς ἐπεικάσαι πάθη  
 πάρεστιν, ὄρκος τ' ἐμμένει πιστώμασι. 525  
 ξυνώμοσαν μὲν θάνατον ἀθλίῳ πατρὶ  
 καὶ ξυνθανεῖσθαι· καὶ τὰδ' εὐόρκως ἔχει.  
 Ἴδεσθε δ' αὖτε, τῶνδ' ἐπήκοοι κακῶν,  
 τὸ μηχάνημα, δεσμὸν ἀθλίῳ πατρὶ,  
 πέδας τε χειροῖν καὶ ποδοῖν ξυνωρίδα. 530  
 ἐκτεínaτ' αὐτὸ καὶ κύκλω παρασταδὸν  
 στέγαστρον ἀνδρὸς δείξαθ', ὡς ἴδη πατῆρ,  
 οὐχ οὐμός, ἀλλ' ὁ πάντ' ἐποπτεύων τάδε  
 Ἥλιος, ἄναγνα μητρὸς ἔργα τῆς ἐμῆς,  
 ὡς ἂν παρῆ μοι μάρτυς ἐν δίκῃ ποτέ, 535  
 ὡς τόνδ' ἐγὼ μετῆλθον ἐνδίκως μόρον  
 τὸν μητρός· Αἰγίσθου γὰρ οὐ λέγω μόρον·  
 ἔχει γὰρ αἰσχυνητῆρος, ὡς νόμος, δίκην·  
 ἦτις δ' ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ τοῦτ' ἐμήσατο στύγος,  
 ἐξ οὗ τέκνων ἦνευχ' ὑπὸ ζώνην βάρους, 540  
 φίλον τέως, νῦν δ' ἐχθρόν, ὡς φαίνει, κακόν,  
 τί σοι δοκεῖ; μύραινά γ' εἴτ' ἔχιδν' ἔφθ  
 σήπειν θιγοῦσ' ἂν ἄλλον οὐ δεδηγμένον  
 τόλμης ἕκατι κακδίκου φρονήματος.  
 τί νιν προσείπω, κὰν τύχω μάλ' εὐστομῶν;  
 ἄγρευμα θηρός, ἢ νεκροῦ ποδένδυτον 546  
 δροίτης κατασκήνωμα; δίκτυον μὲν οὔν,

Toils you might say, or long foot-trammelling robes;  
 Just such a thing some cozener might contrive,  
 One who tricks travellers, practising the trade  
 Of robbery. Many with this knavish snare  
 Might he destroy, and his heart often glow.  
 With such a woman never may I share  
 My home. Sooner let heaven slay me, childless.

*Ch.* Ah me! Ah me! 'Twas a wicked deed.  
 By a terrible death thou art laid low.  
 Alas!

Woe is flowering too for the living.

*Or.* Did she the deed, or did she not? I call  
 This robe to witness, dyed by Aegisthus' sword.  
 'Tis gushing blood that here hath aided time  
 In spoiling the embroidery's many hues.  
 Now can I praise, now wail him where he fell:  
 And as I address this web that slew my sire,  
 I grieve for the crime, the penance, the whole race.  
 Such victory wins not envy, but pollution.

*Ch.* No mortal man may pass through his life  
 Without scathe, if he pay not in sorrow.  
 Alas!

Woe must be, to-day or hereafter.

*Or.* Now hear me, for I know not how it will end—  
 Yea, like a driver mastered by his steeds,  
 My restive wits are whirling me astray  
 Far from the course; while Terror fain would sing  
 To my heart, and set her dancing to his tune.  
 So while I am sane, proclaiming to my friends  
 I say, with justice did I slay my mother,  
 My sire's foul murderess, abhorred of heaven.

- ἄρκυν τ' ἂν εἴποις καὶ ποδιστήρας πέπλους.  
 τοιοῦτον ἂν κτήσαιτο φηλήτης ἀνὴρ,  
 ξένων ἀπαιόλημα κάργυροστερῆ 550  
 βίον νομίζων, τῶδέ τ' ἂν δολώματι  
 πολλοὺς ἀναιρῶν πολλὰ θερμαίνοι φρένα.  
 τοιάδ' ἐμοὶ ξύνοικος ἐν δόμοισι μὴ  
 γένοιτ'· ὀλοίμην πρόσθεν ἐκ θεῶν ἄπαις.
- Χο. αἰαὶ αἰαὶ μελέων ἔργων· 555  
 στυγερῶ θανάτῳ διεπράχθης.  
 ἐ ἔ, μίμνοντι δὲ καὶ πάθος ἀνθεῖ.
- Ορ. ἔδρασεν ἢ οὐκ ἔδρασε; μαρτυρεῖ δέ μοι  
 φᾶρος τόδ', ὡς ἔβαψεν Αἰγίσθου ξίφος.  
 φόνου δὲ κηκὶς ξὺν χρόνῳ ξυμβάλλεται, 560  
 πολλὰς βαφὰς φθείρουσα τοῦ ποικίλματος.  
 νῦν αὐτὸν αἰνῶ, νῦν ἀποιμῶζω παρών,  
 πατροκτόνου θ' ὕφασμα προσφωνῶν τόδε  
 ἀλγῶ μὲν ἔργα καὶ πάθος γένος τε πᾶν,  
 ἄζηλα νίκης τῆσδ' ἔχων μιάσματα. 565
- Χο. οὔτις μερόπων ἀσινῆ βίοτον  
 διὰ παντὸς ἀνατος ἀμείψει.  
 ἐ ἔ, μόχθος δ' ὁ μὲν αὐτίχ', ὁ δ' ἤξει.
- Ορ. ἄλλ' ὡς ἂν εἰδῆτ', οὐ γὰρ οἶδ' ὅπη τελεί—  
 ὥσπερ ξὺν ἵπποις ἠνιοστρόφον δρόμον 570  
 ἐξωτέρῳ φέρουσι γὰρ νικῶμενον  
 φρένες δύσαρκοι· πρὸς δὲ καρδίᾳ φόβος  
 ἄδειν ἔτοιμος ἢ δ' ὑπορχεῖσθαι κότῳ.  
 ἕως δ' ἔτ' ἔμφρων εἰμί, κηρύσσω φίλοις,  
 κτανεῖν τέ φημι μητέρ' οὐκ ἄνευ δίκης, 575  
 πατροκτόνου μίασμα καὶ θεῶν στύγος.

And for the spells that nerved me to this deed,  
 I cite the Pythian oracle of Loxias,  
 That should I act thus, I were clear of blame,  
 But if I failed to act—how name the penalty?  
 So now behold me: furnished with this bough  
 Enwreathed with wool, a suppliant will I go  
 To the mid-navel shrine, the home of Loxias,  
 And to that fire-light, famed imperishable,  
 Exiled for kindred bloodshed. To no hearth  
 Save his did Loxias bid me turn for refuge.  
 A wandering, homeless fugitive, I leave  
 Behind me, in life or death, such fame as this.

*Ch.* Nay, thou hast done well. Yoke not then thy lips  
 To ill-omened speech, nor utter boding words.

*Or.* Ah! Ah!

Bondwomen, see them yonder, Gorgon-like,  
 In dusky raiment, twined about with coils  
 Of swarming snakes! I cannot stay here more.

*Ch.* What fantasies toss thee, dearest of all sons  
 To a father? Stay: fear nothing. Thou hast vanquished.

*Or.* To me these horrors are no fantasies,  
 But indeed the sleuth-hounds of my mother's wrath.

*Ch.* 'Tis that the blood is yet fresh on thy hands.  
 Hence the confusion that invades thy soul.

*Or.* Sovereign Apollo, yonder they come now thronging!  
 And from their eyes is dripping a loathsome gore.

*Ch.* In, in! The purge of Loxias with a touch  
 Shall free thee from such visionary horrors.

*Or.* Ye do not see these beings, but I see them.  
 I am hunted by them. I can stay no more.

*Ch.* Blessings go with thee, and may gracious Gods  
 Watch over and keep thee safe with happy chance.



- καὶ φίλτρα τόλμης τῆσδε πλειστηρίζομαι  
τὸν πυθόμαντιν Λοξίαν, χρήσαντ' ἐμοὶ  
πράξαντι μὲν ταῦτ' ἐκτὸς αἰτίας κακῆς  
εἶναι, παρέντα δ'—οὐκ ἐρῶ τὴν ζημίαν· 580  
καὶ νῦν ὄρατέ μ', ὡς παρεσκευασμένος  
ξὺν τῷδε θαλλῷ καὶ στέφει προσίξομαι  
μεσόμφαλόν θ' Ἴδρυμα, Λοξίου πέδον,  
πυρός τε φέγγος ἄφθιτον κεκλημένον,  
φεύγων τόδ' αἷμα κοινόν· οὐδ' ἐφ' ἐστίαν 585  
ἄλλην τραπέσθαι Λοξίας ἐφίετο.  
ἐγὼ δ' ἀλήτης τῆσδε γῆς ἀπόξενος,  
ζῶν καὶ τεθνηκὼς τάσδε κληδόνας λιπών—  
Χο. ἀλλ' εὖ γ' ἔπραξας, μηδ' ἐπιζευχθῆς στόμα  
φήμη πονηρᾶ μηδ' ἐπιγλωσσῶ κακά. 590  
Ορ. ᾠ, ᾠ.  
δμῶαὶ γυναῖκες αἶδε Γοργόνων δίκην  
φαιοχίτωνες καὶ πεπλεκτανημένοι  
πυκνοῖς δράκουσιν· οὐκέτ' ἂν μείναιμ' ἐγώ.  
Χο. τίνες σὲ δόξαι, φίλτατ' ἀνθρώπων πατρί, 595  
στροβοῦσιν; ἴσχε, μὴ φοβοῦ, νικῶν πολῦ.  
Ορ. οὐκ εἰσὶ δόξαι τῶνδε πημάτων ἐμοί·  
σαφῶς γὰρ αἶδε μητρὸς ἔγκοτοι κύνες.  
Χο. ποταίνιον γὰρ αἷμά σοι χεροῖν ἔτι·  
ἐκ τῶνδέ τοι ταραγμὸς ἐς φρένας πίτνει. 600  
Ορ. ἄναξ Ἄπολλον, αἶδε πληθύουσι δῆ,  
κάξ ὀμμάτων στάζουσιν αἷμα δυσφιλές.  
Χο. εἰς σοὶ καθαρμός· Λοξίας δὲ προσθιγῶν  
ἐλεύθερόν σε τῶνδε πημάτων κτίσει.  
Ορ. ὑμεῖς μὲν οὐχ ὄρατε τάσδ', ἐγὼ δ' ὄρῳ· 605  
ἐλαύνομαι δὲ κούκέτ' ἂν μείναιμ' ἐγώ.  
Χο. ἀλλ' εὐτυχοίης, καὶ σ' ἐποπτεύων πρόφρων  
θεὸς φυλάσσοι καιρίοισι συμφοραῖς.

Thus again for a third time, risen from the race,  
Hath a storm swept over

The house of our kings and subsided.

First was the cruel doom of the children  
Slain at the banquet.

Next was the anguish of a man, of a king,

When the Achaeans' warrior chieftain

In the bath fell slain.

Now comes yet a third, a deliverer, nay,

Rather destroyer.

What end shall there be? When shall the fury  
Of revenge sink lulled into slumber?

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ὄδε τοι μελάθροισ τοῖς βασιλείοις  
 τρίτος αὖ χειμῶν 610  
     πνεύσας γούιας ἐτελέσθη.  
 παιδοβόροι μὲν πρῶτον ὑπήρξαν  
 μόχθοι τάλανες·  
 δεύτερον ἀνδρὸς βασίλεια πάθη·  
 λουτροδαίικτος δ' ᾤλετ' Ἀχαιῶν 615  
 πολέμαρχος ἀνὴρ·  
 νῦν δ' αὖ τρίτος ἦλθέ ποθεν σωτήρ,  
 ἧ μόρον εἶπω ;  
 ποῖ δῆτα κρανεῖ, ποῖ καταλήξει  
     μετακοιμισθὲν μένος ἄτης ; 620



THE EUMENIDES  
OF  
AESCHYLUS

## THE EUMENIDES

[*Before the temple of Apollo at Delphi. Enter the Pythian* PROPHECESS.]

### THE PROPHECESS

First of all gods I worship in my prayer  
The first diviner Earth; after her Themis,  
The second, legend saith, to take her seat  
Here in her mother's shrine. Third in succession,  
With her consent, no violence done to any,  
Another Titan child of Earth took seat,  
Phoebe: who as a birthday gift bestowed it  
On Phoebus, bearing a name from her derived.  
His mind with divine art did Zeus inspire,  
And seated him, fourth prophet, on this throne,  
As Loxias, spokesman of his father Zeus.  
These gods I worship in my opening prayer.  
Pallas our neighbour too I name with reverence.  
I adore the Nymphs who haunt the caverned rock  
Corycis, loved by birds, by gods frequented.  
The springs of Pleistos and Poseidon's might  
I invoke, and Zeus supreme, the crown of all,  
Then seat myself as prophetess on my throne.  
May they now bless my entrance more than ever  
In past days. Let all Hellenes present here  
Approach, as custom bids, by fall of lot.  
As the God leads me, so do I give response.

[*The PROPHECESS enters the shrine, but quickly returns.*]

Things terrible to speak, terrible to see,  
Have driven me forth again from Loxias' house.

## THE EUMENIDES

[*Before the temple of Apollo at Delphi. Enter the Pythian PROPHETESS.*]

### ΠΥΘΙΑΣ

Πρῶτον μὲν εὐχῇ τῆδε πρεσβεύω θεῶν  
τὴν πρωτόμαντιν Γαίαν· ἐκ δὲ τῆς Θέμιν,  
ἢ δὴ τὸ μητρὸς δευτέρα τόδ' ἔζητο  
μαντεῖον, ὡς λόγος τις· ἐν δὲ τῷ τρίτῳ  
λάχει, θελούσης, οὐδὲ πρὸς βίαν τινός, 5  
Τιτανὶς ἄλλη παῖς Χθονὸς καθέζητο,  
Φοῖβη· δίδωσι δ' ἢ γενέθλιον δόσιν  
Φοῖβω· τὸ Φοῖβης δ' ὄνομ' ἔχει παρώνυμον.  
τέχνης δέ νιν Ζεὺς ἔνθεον κτίσας φρένα  
ἵζει τέταρτον τοῖσδε μάντιν ἐν θρόνοις· 10  
Διὸς προφήτης δ' ἐστὶ Λοξίας πατρός.  
τούτους ἐν εὐχαῖς φροιμιάζομαι θεούς.  
Παλλὰς προναία δ' ἐν λόγοις πρεσβεύεται.  
σέβω δὲ νύμφας, ἔνθα Κωρυκὶς πέτρα  
κοίλη, φίλορνις, δαιμόνων ἀναστροφή· 15  
Πλειστοῦ τε πηγὰς καὶ Ποσειδῶνος κράτος  
καλοῦσα καὶ τέλειον ὕψιστον Δία,  
ἔπειτα μάντις ἐς θρόνους καθιζάνω.  
καὶ νῦν τυχεῖν με τῶν πρὶν εἰσόδων μακρῶ  
ἄριστα δοῖεν· κεῖ παρ' Ἑλλήνων τινές, 20  
ἴτων πάλω λαχόντες, ὡς νομίζεται.  
μαντεύομαι γὰρ ὡς ἂν ἡγήται θεός.

[*The PROPHETESS enters the shrine, but quickly returns.*]

ἢ δεινὰ λέξαι, δεινὰ δ' ὀφθαλμοῖς δρακεῖν,  
πάλιν μ' ἔπεμψεν ἐκ δόμων τῶν Λοξίου,

When I drew near the wreath-decked inmost cell,  
 Upon the navel-stone I saw a man  
 Polluted, in a suppliant attitude.  
 With blood his hands were dripping, and he held  
 A drawn sword and a high-grown branch of olive,  
 Humbly enwreathed with a broad band of wool.  
 Between me and this man a fearful troop  
 Of women slumbered, seated upon chairs.  
 Yet not women: Gorgons call them rather.  
 Dusky they are, and loathsome altogether.  
 They snore with such blasts none may venture near;  
 And from their eyes a foul rheum oozes forth.  
 Their garb is neither fit to approach the statues  
 Of deities, nor to enter homes of men.  
 For what may ensue, let mightiest Loxias,  
 Who is master of this house, himself provide.  
 He is healing seer and judge of prodigies,  
 And can purge houses other than his own.

[*Exit* PROPHETESS. *The interior of the shrine is dis-*  
*closed. APOLLO, HERMES, ORESTES and the*  
*sleeping FURIES are discovered.*]

APOLLO

I shall not fail. To the end will I protect thee.  
 Near shall I be, even though far away:  
 Nor will I prove soft to thy enemies.  
 Awhile thou seest yon ravers subdued.  
 Lo sunken in sleep the loathly virgins lie,  
 These hoary ancient maidens, with whom never  
 Hath any god mingled, nor man, nor beast.  
 Evil was cause of their creation, evil  
 The murky pit of Tartarus where they dwell  
 Abhorred by men and by the Olympian gods.



ἐγὼ μὲν ἔρπω πρὸς πολυστεφῆ μυχόν· 25  
 ὀρώ δ' ἐπ' ὀμφαλῶ μὲν ἄνδρα θεομυσῆ  
 ἔδραν ἔχοντα προστρόπαιον, αἵματι  
 στάζοντα χεῖρας καὶ νεοσπαδῆς ξίφος  
 ἔχοντ' ἐλαίας θ' ὑψιγέννητον κλάδου,  
 λήνει μεγίστῳ σωφρόνως ἐστεμμένον, 30  
 πρόσθεν δὲ τάνδρὸς τοῦδε θαύμαστὸς λόχος  
 εὔδει γυναικῶν ἐν θρόνοισιν ἤμενος.  
 οὔτοι γυναῖκας, ἀλλὰ Γοργόνας λέγω  
 ταύτας, μέλαιναι δ' ἐς τὸ πᾶν βδελύκτροποι·  
 ῥέγκουσι δ' οὐ πλατοῖσι φυσιάμασιν· 35  
 ἐκ δ' ὀμμάτων λείβουσι δυσφιλή λίβα·  
 καὶ κόσμος οὔτε πρὸς θεῶν ἀγάλματα  
 φέρειν δίκαιος οὔτ' ἐς ἀνθρώπων στέγας.  
 τάντεῦθεν ἤδη τῶνδε δεσπότη δόμων  
 αὐτῷ μελέσθω Λοξία μεγασθενεῖ. 40  
 ἰατρόμαντις δ' ἐστὶ καὶ τερασκόπος·  
 καὶ τοῖσιν ἄλλοις δωμάτων καθάρσιος.

[*Exit* PROPHETESS. *The interior of the shrine is disclosed. APOLLO, HERMES, ORESTES and the sleeping FURIES are discovered.*]

## ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

οὔτοι προδώσω· διὰ τέλους δέ σοι φύλαξ  
 ἐγγὺς παρεστὼς καὶ πρόσω δ' ἀποστατῶν  
 ἐχθροῖσι τοῖς σοῖς οὐ γενήσομαι πέπων. 45  
 καὶ νῦν ἀλούσας τάσδε τὰς μάργους ὄρα·  
 ὑπνῷ πεσοῦσαι δ' αἱ κατάπτυστοι κόραι,  
 γραῖαι παλαιαὶ παῖδες, αἷς οὐ μίγνυται  
 θεῶν τις οὐδ' ἀνθρώπος οὐδὲ θήρ ποτε·  
 κακῶν δ' ἕκατι καγένοντ', ἐπεὶ κακὸν 50  
 σκότον νέμονται Τάρταρόν θ' ὑπὸ χθονός,  
 μισήματ' ἀνδρῶν καὶ θεῶν Ὀλυμπίων.

Yet do not thou grow faint, but fly far hence:  
 For they will chase thee across the long mainland,  
 Ever new soil beneath thy wandering tread,  
 And beyond seas and past wave-girded towns.  
 Let not thy heart faint brooding on thy penance,  
 Till thou take refuge in the city of Pallas  
 And clasp her ancient image in thy arms.  
 There before judges of thy cause, with speech  
 Of soothing power, we will discover means  
 To set thee free for ever from these woes.  
 For I did counsel thee to slay thy mother.

ORESTES

Sovereign Apollo, what is just thou knowest:  
 Now therefore study to neglect it not.  
 Thy power to succour needs no warranty.

*Ap.* Remember: let not fear subdue thy soul.  
 And thou, born of one father, my own brother,  
 Hermes, protect him: prove thy title true  
 As Guide, by shepherding my suppliant here.  
 The sanctity of an outlaw Zeus respects,  
 When thus with prosperous escort he is sped.

[*APOLLO vanishes. ORESTES leaves the temple, guided  
 by HERMES. Enter the GHOST OF CLYTAEMNESTRA.*]

GHOST OF CLYTAEMNESTRA

Sleep, would you? Shame! What need of sleepers here?  
 And I by you thus held in slight regard  
 Among the other dead, and followed still  
 By the reproach of murder among the shades,  
 Yet wronged so foully by my nearest kin,  
 No spirit power shows wrath on my behalf,  
 Though slaughtered by the hands of a matricide.  
 Look now upon these wounds; look with thy soul.

ὄμως δὲ φεύγε, μηδὲ μαλθακὸς γένη,  
 ἐλώσι γάρ σε καὶ δι' ἠπείρου μακρᾶς  
 βιβῶντ' ἄν' αἰεὶ τὴν πλανοστιβῆ χθόνα 55  
 ὑπέρ τε πόντον καὶ περιρρύτας πόλεις.  
 καὶ μὴ πρόκαμνε τόνδε βουκολούμενος  
 πόνον· μολῶν δὲ Παλλάδος ποτὶ πτόλιον  
 ἴζου παλαιὸν ἄγκαθεν λαβὼν βρέτας.  
 κακὴ δикаστὰς τῶνδε καὶ θελκτηρίους 60  
 μύθους ἔχοντες μηχανὰς εὐρήσομεν  
 ὥστ' ἐς τὸ πᾶν σε τῶνδ' ἀπαλλάξαι πόνων.  
 καὶ γὰρ κτανεῖν σ' ἔπεισα μητρῶον δέμας.

## ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἄναξ Ἀπολλων, οἶσθα μὲν τὸ μὴ ἴδικεῖν·  
 ἐπεὶ δ' ἐπίστα, καὶ τὸ μὴ μελεῖν μάθε. 65  
 σθένος δὲ ποιεῖν εὖ φερέγγυον τὸ σόν.  
 Απ. μέμνησο, μὴ φόβος σὲ νικάτω φρένας.  
 σὺ δ' αὐτάδελφον αἷμα καὶ κοινοῦ πατρός,  
 Ἑρμῆ, φύλασσε· κάρτα δ' ὦν ἐπώνυμος  
 πομπαῖος ἴσθι, τόνδε ποιμαίνων ἐμόν 70  
 ἰκέτην. σέβει τοι Ζεὺς τόδ' ἐκνόμων σέβας,  
 ὀρμώμενον βροτοῖσιν εὐπόμπω τύχη.

[APOLLO vanishes. ORESTES leaves the temple, guided  
 by HERMES. Enter the GHOST OF CLYTEMNESTRA.]

## ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑΣ ΕΙΔΩΛΟΝ

εὔδοιτ' ἄν, ὦή, καὶ καθευδουσῶν τί δεῖ;  
 ἐγὼ δ' ὑφ' ὑμῶν ὦδ' ἀπητιμασμένα  
 ἄλλοισιν ἐν νεκροῖσιν, ὦν μὲν ἔκτανον 75  
 ὄνειδος ἐν φθιτοῖσιν οὐκ ἐκλείπεται,  
 παθοῦσα δ' οὕτω δεινὰ πρὸς τῶν φιλτάτων,  
 οὐδεὶς ὑπέρ μου δαιμόνων μνηΐται,  
 κατασφαγείσης πρὸς χερῶν μητροκτόνων.  
 ὄρα δὲ πληγὰς τάσδε καρδίᾳ σέθεν· 80

For while it sleeps, the mind is lit with eyes.  
 Oft indeed of my offerings have you lapped,  
 Wineless libations, sober soothing draughts,  
 Dread midnight banquets, when no god but you  
 Is worshipped, on the altar would I sacrifice.  
 All this, I see, is spurned beneath your feet.  
 The man is gone, escaping like a fawn,  
 Ay, from the very snares' midst has he sprung  
 Lightly, making great mouths at you in scorn.  
 Hear me. 'Tis for my very soul I plead.  
 Awake, O goddesses of the nether world.  
 In dream now do I, Clytaemnestra, call you.

## CHORUS

(Mutterings.)

*Cl.* Yes, whimper! But the man is gone, fled far.

*Ch.* (Mutterings.)

*Cl.* Too deep you drowse, and pity not my wrong.

Fled is Orestes, who slew me, his mother.

*Ch.* (Moanings.)

*Cl.* Whining and drowsing! Come, rise up forthwith.

*Ch.* (Moanings.)

*Cl.* Sleep and fatigue, puissant conspirators,

Have spoiled the dreadful dragoness of her might.

*Ch.* (Mutterings redoubled and louder.)

Follow, follow, follow, follow! Mark there!

*Cl.* In dream you hunt your prey, and give tongue like

A hound, whose fancy never quits the chase.

What dost thou? Arise! Let not fatigue defeat thee.

Let thy heart wince at merited rebuke,

Which to the righteous is a very goad.

Waft thou thy blood-hot breath upon the man:

εὔδουσα γὰρ φρὴν ὄμμασιν λαμπρύνεται.  
 ἢ πολλὰ μὲν δὴ τῶν ἐμῶν ἐλείξατε,  
 χοάς τ' ἀοίνους, νηφάλια μειλίγματα,  
 καὶ νυκτίσεμνα δεῖπν' ἐπ' ἐσχάρα πυρὸς  
 ἔθουον, ὄραν οὐδενὸς κοινήν θεῶν. 85  
 καὶ πάντα ταῦτα λάξ ὀρώ πατούμενα.  
 ὁ δ' ἐξαλύξας οἴχεται νεβροῦ δίκην,  
 καὶ ταῦτα κούφως ἐκ μέσων ἀρκυστάτων  
 ὄρουσεν ὑμῖν ἐγκατιλλώψας μέγα.  
 ἀκούσαθ' ὡς ἔλεξα τῆς ἐμῆς περὶ 90  
 ψυχῆς, φρονήσατ', ὦ κατὰ χθονὸς θεαί.  
 ὄναρ γὰρ ὑμᾶς νῦν Κλυταιμῆστρα καλῶ.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ

(μυγμός.)  
 Κλ. μύζοιτ' ἄν, ἀνήρ δ' οἴχεται φεύγων πρόσω.  
 Χο. (μυγμός.) 95  
 Κλ. ἄγαν ὑπνώσσεις κοῦ κατοικτίζεις πάθος·  
 φονεὺς δ' Ὀρέστης τῆσδε μητρὸς οἴχεται.  
 Χο. (ὠγμός.)  
 Κλ. ὥξεις, ὑπνώσσεις· οὐκ ἀναστήσει τάχος;  
 Χο. (ὠγμός.) 100  
 Κλ. ὑπνος πόνος τε κύριοι συνωμόται  
 δεινῆς δρακαίνης ἐξεκῆραναν μένος.  
 Χο. (μυγμὸς διπλοῦς ὀξύς.)  
 λαβὲ λαβὲ λαβὲ λαβέ, φράζου.  
 Κλ. ὄναρ διώκεις θῆρα, κλαγγαίνεις δ' ἄπερ 105  
 κῶν μέριμναν οὔποτ' ἐκλείπων πόνου.  
 τί δρᾶς; ἀνίστω, μὴ σε νικάτω πόνος.  
 ἄλγησον ἦπαρ ἐνδίκους ὀνειδέσιν·  
 τοῖς σώφροσιν γὰρ ἀντίκεντρα γίγνεται.  
 σὺ δ' αἵματηρὸν πνεῦμ' ἐπούρισασα τῷ, 110

Shrivel him with thy belly's fiery blast.  
Follow him; wither him with a fresh pursuit.

[*Exit the GHOST OF CLYTAEMNESTRA.*]

*Ch.* Awake!—Do thou wake *her*—while I wake *thee*.  
Dost thou sleep? Rise; and spurning sleep afar,  
Let us see if this warning dream prove false.

Behold! Behold! Oh shame! See, we have suffered  
wrong!

Much painful toil have I endured, and all in vain.  
Bitter indeed the wrong done to us. Oh the shame!  
Defeat hard to bear! [is gone.  
Our game has slipped right through the meshes, and  
By sleep subdued, lo! I have lost, lost the prey.

[*APOLLO re-appears.*]

Aha, son of Zeus! Thou art a thief, and knave.  
Thy youth rides trampling over elder deities.  
What is thy suppliant? What but a godless man,  
A cruel son? Yet him,  
This matricide, thou hast stolen from us, thou, a god.  
Who dares pretend—none—that such deeds are just?

*Ap.* Out, I command you, from these precincts! Hence  
With speed! Begone from my prophetic shrine;  
Lest smitten by a wingèd glistening snake  
Sped from my gold-wrought bow-string, thou in  
anguish  
Shouldst spit forth foam darkened with human blood.  
This is no dwelling fit for your approach.  
Go rather where doomed heads are lopped, eyes  
gouged,  
Throats cut; where by destruction of the seed

ἀτμῷ κατισχναίνουσα, νηδύος πυρί,  
ἔπου, μάραϊνε δευτέροις διώγμασιν.

[Exit the GHOST OF CLYTAEMNESTRA.]

Χο. ἔγειρ', ἔγειρε καὶ σὺ τήνδ', ἐγὼ δὲ σέ.  
εὔδεις; ἀνίστω, κάπολακτίσασ' ὕπνον,  
ιδώμεθ' εἴ τι τοῦδε φροιμίου ματᾶ. 115

ἰὸν ἰὸν πόπαξ. ἐπάθομεν, φίλαι,—  
ἦ πολλὰ δὴ παθοῦσα καὶ μάτην ἐγώ,—  
ἐπάθομεν πάθος δυσσαχές, ὦ πόποι,  
ἄφερτον κακόν.  
ἔξ ἀρκύων πέπτωκεν οἴχεταιί θ' ὁ θήρ— 120  
ὕπνω κρατηθεῖς ἄγραν ὤλεσα.

[APOLLO re-appears.]

ἰὼ παῖ Διός, ἐπίκλοπος πέλει,—  
νέος δὲ γραίας δαίμονας καθιππάσω,—  
τὸν ἰκέταν σέβων, ἄθεον ἄνδρα καὶ  
τοκεῦσιν πικρόν, 125  
τὸν μητραλοῖαν δ' ἐξέκλεψας ὦν θεός.—  
τί τῶνδ' ἐρεῖ τις δικαίως ἔχειν;

Απ. ἔξω, κελεύω, τῶνδε δωμάτων τάχος  
χωρεῖτ', ἀπαλλάσσεσθε μαντικῶν μυχῶν,  
μὴ καὶ λαβοῦσα πτηνὸν ἀργηστήν ὄφιν, 130  
χρυσηλάτου θώμιγγος ἐξορμώμενον,  
ἀνῆς ὑπ' ἄλγους μέλαν' ἀπ' ἀνθρώπων ἀφρόν.  
οὔτοι δόμοισι τοῖσδε χρίμπτεσθαι πρέπει·  
ἄλλ' οὐ καραμιστῆρες ὀφθαλμωρύχοι  
δίκαι σφαγαί τε σπέρματός τ' ἀποφθορᾶ 135

The virile strength of boys is maimed, where men  
 Are sliced or stoned, or wail in long-drawn moans  
 Impaled beneath the spine. Do you hear me? Go,  
 Vile flock without a shepherd; get you hence!  
 For such a herd no god has love to give.

*Ch.* Sovereign Apollo, hear now our reply.

Thou thyself art not guilty of this in part:  
 Thou alone didst all; the whole guilt is thine.

*Ap.* How? Make that clear. I grant thee speech so far.

*Ch.* Thy voice enjoined this man to slay his mother.

*Ap.* I enjoined him to avenge his sire. What then?

*Ch.* We hunt forth mother-slayers from all homes.

*Ap.* How deal you then with wives who slay their lords?

*Ch.* That were no true murder of kindred blood.

*Ap.* Then of slight honour and no worth you make  
 The troth-pledge between Zeus and crowning Hera.  
 The fate-sealed marriage bed of man and wife,  
 Fenced with its rights, is mightier than all oaths.  
 Then without justice you pursue Orestes.  
 But Pallas at this trial shall arbitrate.

*Ch.* And I, drawn by a mother's blood, pursue  
 This man with vengeance, till I hunt him down.

*Ap.* And I will aid my suppliant and protect him.  
 For dreaded among men and gods alike  
 Is the appealer's wrath, should I forsake him.

*[Exeunt omnes. The scene changes to ATHENS. Enter  
 ORESTES, who takes sanctuary at a shrine of  
 ATHENA.]*

*Or.* Goddess Athena, by command of Loxias  
 I come. Receive this outcast graciously,  
 No suppliant unabsolved with hand unpurged;



- παίδων κακοῦται χλοῦνις, ἡδ' ἀκρωνία,  
 λευσμός τε, καὶ μύζουσιν οἰκτισμὸν πολὺν  
 ὑπὸ ῥάχιν παγέντες. ἄρ' ἀκούετε;  
 χωρεῖτ' ἄνευ βοτῆρος αἰπολούμεναι·  
 ποίμνης τοιαύτης δ' οὔτις εὐφιλῆς θεῶν. 140
- Χο. ἄναξ Ἄπολλον, ἀντάκουσον ἐν μέρει.  
 αὐτὸς σὺ τούτων οὐ μεταίτιος πέλει,  
 ἀλλ' εἰς τὸ πᾶν ἔπραξας ὦν παναίτιος.
- Απ. πῶς δῆ; τοσοῦτο μῆκος ἔκτεινον λόγου.
- Χο. ἔχρησας ὥστε τὸν ξένον μητροκτονεῖν. 145
- Απ. ἔχρησα ποιναὸς τοῦ πατρὸς πράξαι. τί μῆν;
- Χο. τοὺς μητραλοίας ἐκ δόμων ἐλαύνομεν.
- Απ. τί γὰρ γυναικὸς ἦτις ἄνδρα νοσφίση;
- Χο. οὐκ ἂν γένοιθ' ὄμαιμος αὐθέντης φόνος.
- Απ. ἦ κάρτ' ἄτιμα καὶ παρ' οὐδὲν ἠρκέσω 150  
 Ἡρας τελείας καὶ Διὸς πιστώματα.  
 εὐνή γὰρ ἀνδρὶ καὶ γυναικὶ μόρσιμος  
 ὄρκου ἄστί μείζων τῇ δίκη φρουρουμένη.  
 οὐ φημ' Ὀρέστην σ' ἐνδίκως ἀνδρῆλατεῖν.  
 δίκας δὲ Παλλὰς τῶνδ' ἐποπτεύσει θεά. 155
- Χο. ἐγὼ δ', ἄγει γὰρ αἷμα μητρῶν, δίκας  
 μέτειμι τόνδε φῶτα κάκκυνηγετῶ.
- Απ. ἐγὼ δ' ἀρήξω τὸν ἰκέτην τε ῥύσομαι·  
 δεινὴ γὰρ ἐν βροτοῖσι κὰν θεοῖς πέλει  
 τοῦ προστροπαίου μῆνις, εἰ προδῶ σφ' ἐκῶν. 160
- [Exeunt omnes. The scene changes to ATHENS. Enter  
 ORESTES, who takes sanctuary at a shrine of  
 ATHENA.]
- Ορ. ἄνασσ' Ἀθᾶνα, Λοξίου κελεύσμασιν  
 ἦκω, δέχου δὲ πρευμενῶς ἀλάστορα,  
 οὐ προστρόπαιον οὐδ' ἀφοίβαντον χέρα,

Long since the stain is dimmed and worn away  
 By sojournings and journeyings among men.  
 Obedient now to Loxias' oracles  
 I approach thy dwelling and thine image, Goddess.  
 Here clinging, will I wait my trial's end.

[*Enter the FURIES.*]

*Ch.* Good! Here is a clear trace of the man.  
 The smell of human blood smiles sweetly upon me.

Again, search again! Spy into every nook,  
 For fear the matricide stealthily slip from our wrath.  
 Yes, there again safe he lurks,  
 Clinging around the image of the deathless god:  
 Trial he now would claim for his foul handiwork.  
 But it may not be: a mother's blood, once spilt, is  
 To gather up; hard indeed. [hard  
 That which on earth is shed vanishes and is gone.  
 Now thou in turn must yield me from thy living self,  
 Ruddy and rich from the heart, liquor to lap: and on  
 I mean to thrive, evil draught though it be. [thee  
 I'll wither thee alive and drag thee down below,  
 There to atone, pang for pang, thy mother's agony.

*Or.* Schooled by my miseries, I have experience  
 In purifying rites. Where speech befits  
 I know, where silence too. But in this case  
 A wise instructor charges me to speak.  
 For the blood sleeps and is fading from my hand:  
 The stain of matricide is washed away.  
 While yet fresh, at divine Apollo's hearth  
 It was expelled by purging blood of swine.

ἀλλ' ἀμβλὺν ἤδη προστετριμμένον τε πρὸς  
 ἄλλοισιν οἴκοις καὶ πορεύμασιν βροτῶν. 165  
 σφῶζων ἐφετμὰς Λοξίου χρηστηρίους,  
 πρόσσειμι δῶμα καὶ βρέτας τὸ σόν, θεά,  
 αὐτοῦ φυλάσσω ἀμμενῶ τέλος δίκης.

[Enter the FURIES.]

Χο. εἶεν· τόδ' ἐστὶ τάνδρὸς ἐκφανὲς τέκμαρ.  
 ὀσμὴ βροτείων αἱμάτων με προσγελά. 170

ὄρα ὄρα μάλ' αὖ  
 λεῦσέ τε πάντα, μὴ  
 λάθη φύγδα βὰς  
 ματροφόνος ἀτίτας.—  
 ὁ δ' αὐτέ γ' ἀλκὰν ἔχων 175

περὶ βρέτει πλεχθεὶς θεᾶς ἀμβρότου  
 ὑπόδικος θέλει γενέσθαι χερῶν.—  
 τὸ δ' οὐ πάρεστιν· αἷμα μητρῶν χαμαὶ  
 δυσσαγκόμιστον, παπαῖ,  
 τὸ διερὸν πέδοι χύμενον οἴχεται.— 180

ἀλλ' ἀντιδοῦναι δεῖ σ' ἀπὸ ζῶντος ῥοφεῖν  
 ἐρυθρὸν ἐκ μελῶν πέλανον· ἀπὸ δὲ σοῦ  
 φεροίμαν βοσκὰν πώματος δυσπότου.—  
 καὶ ζῶντά σ' ἰσχνάνας' ἀπάξομαι κάτω,  
 ἀντίποιν' ὡς τίνης ματροφόνου δύας. 185

Ορ. ἐγὼ διδαχθεὶς ἐν κακοῖς ἐπίσταμαι  
 πολλοὺς καθαρμούς, καὶ λέγειν ὅπου δίκη  
 σιγᾶν θ' ὁμοίως· ἐν δὲ τῷδε πράγματι  
 φωνεῖν ἐτάχθην πρὸς σοφοῦ διδασκάλου·  
 βρίζει γὰρ αἷμα καὶ μαραίνεται χερός, 190  
 μητροκτόνου μίασμα δ' ἔκπλυτον πέλει.  
 ποταίνιον γὰρ ὄν πρὸς ἐστία θεοῦ  
 Φοίβου καθαρμοῖς ἠλάθη χοιροκτόνοις.

Now with pure lips, religiously, I call  
 On this land's Queen, Athena, that she come  
 Hither to aid me.  
 Oh haste—a god hears even from afar—  
 And bring with thee deliverance from these woes.

*Ch.* Ne'er shall Apollo nor Athena's might  
 Protect thee, but abandoned shalt thou perish,  
 Finding no place for gladness in thy soul.  
 Wilt thou not answer, wilt thou scorn my words,  
 Though for me thou art bred and consecrated?  
 Alive, slain at no altar, shalt thou feed me.  
 Now shalt thou hear a hymn to bind thee fast.

Let us now<sup>1</sup> with solemn step move in accord,  
 And show in accord  
 The enthralling might of our music.  
 Come now let us preach to the sons of men:  
 Yea let us tell them of our vengeance:  
 Yea let us all make mention of justice.  
 Whoso showeth hands that are undefiled,  
 Lo he shall suffer nought of us ever,  
 But shall go unharmed to his ending.  
 But, if he hath sinned, like unto this man,  
 And covereth hands that are blood-stained,  
 Then is our witness true to the slain man;  
 And we sue for the blood, sue and pursue for it,  
 So that at the last there is payment.

Mother mine who bare me,  
 Oh Mother Night,  
 To be feared of them who see and see not—hear!

<sup>1</sup> This Ode (lines 206–240) was translated by the late Dr A. W. Verrall.

καὶ νῦν ἀφ' ἀγνοῦ στόματος εὐφήμως καλῶ  
 χώρας ἀνασσαν τῆσδ' Ἀθηναίαν ἐμοὶ 195  
 μολεῖν ἀρωγόν.  
 ἔλθοι,—κλύει δὲ καὶ πρόσωθεν ὦν θεός,—  
 ὅπως γένοιτο τῶνδ' ἐμοὶ λυτήριος.

Χο. οὔτοι σ' Ἀπόλλων οὐδ' Ἀθηναίας σθένος  
 ῥύσαιτ' ἂν ὥστε μὴ οὐ παρημελημένον 200  
 ἔρρειν, τὸ χαίρειν μὴ μαθόνθ' ὅπου φρενῶν·  
 οὐδ' ἀντιφωνεῖς, ἀλλ' ἀποπτύεις λόγους  
 ἐμοὶ τραφεῖς τε καὶ καθιερωμένος·  
 καὶ ζῶν με δαίσεις οὐδὲ πρὸς βωμῶ σφαγεῖς·  
 ὕμνον δ' ἀκούσει τόνδε δέσμιον σέθεν. 205

ἄγε δὴ καὶ χορὸν ἄψωμεν, ἐπεὶ  
 μούσαν στυγεράν  
 ἀποφαίνεσθαι δεδόκηκεν,  
 λέξαι τε λάχῃ, τὰ κατ' ἀνθρώπους  
 ὡς ἐπινωμᾶ στάσις ἀμά. 210  
 εὐθυδίκαιοι δ' οἴομεθ' εἶναι·  
 τὸν μὲν καθαρὰς χεῖρας προνέμοντ'  
 οὔτις ἐφέρπει μῆνις ἀφ' ἡμῶν,  
 ἀσινῆς δ' αἰῶνα διοιχνεῖ·  
 ὅστις δ' ἀλιτῶν ὥσπερ ὄδ' ἀνὴρ 215  
 χεῖρας φονίας ἐπικρύπτει,  
 μάρτυρες ὀρθαὶ τοῖσι θανούσιν  
 παραγιγνόμεναι πράκτορες αἵματος  
 αὐτῷ τελέως ἐφάνημεν.

μᾶτερ ἅ μ' ἔτικτες, ὦ μᾶτερ 220  
 Νύξ, ἀλαοῖσι καὶ δεδορκόσιν ποιῶν,

The young god Apollo, he jests at our justice,  
Covers yon cowering culprit, albeit a mother's blood  
hath marked him mine.

Sing then the spell, Sisters of Hell;  
Chant him the charm, mighty to harm,  
Binding the blood, madding the mood;  
Such the music that we make:  
Quail, ye sons of men, and quake;  
Bow the heart, and bend, and break.

Even so 'tis written

(Oh sentence sure!)

Upon all that wild in wickedness dip hand  
In the blood of their birth, in the fount of their  
flowing:

So shall he pine until the grave receive him—to find  
no grace even in the grave.

Sing then the spell, Sisters of Hell;  
Chant him the charm, mighty to harm,  
Binding the blood, madding the mood;  
Such the music that we make:  
Quail, ye sons of men, and quake;  
Bow the heart, and bend, and break.

ATHENA

I heard a suppliant cry from far away  
Beside Scamander's stream.

Thence came I speeding with unwearied foot,  
To the wingless rustling of my bellying aegis.  
Beholding these strange visitants in my land,  
The sight dismays me not, though it astounds.  
Who are you? I would question all alike,  
Both him who sits a suppliant at my image,  
And you, so unlike aught begotten of seed.

κλύθ'. ὁ Λατοῦς γὰρ ἱνὶς μ' ἄτιμον τίθησι  
τόνδ' ἀφαιρούμενος  
πτῶκα, ματρῶον ἄγνισμα κύριον φόνου.

ἐπὶ δὲ τῷ τεθυμένῳ 225  
τόδε μέλος, παρακοπά,  
παραφορὰ φρενοδαλῆς,  
ὕμνος ἐξ Ἐρινύων,  
δέσμιος φρενῶν, ἀφόρμικτος, αὐτὸνὰ βροτοῖς.

τοῦτο γὰρ λάχος διανταία 230  
Μοῖρ' ἐπέκλωσεν ἐμπέδως ἔχειν, θνατῶν  
τοῖσιν αὐτουργίαι ξυμπέσσωσιν μάταιοι,  
τοῖς ὀμαρτεῖν, ὄφρ' ἂν  
γαῖν ὑπέλθῃ· θανῶν δ' οὐκ ἄγαν ἐλεύθερος.

ἐπὶ δὲ τῷ τεθυμένῳ 235  
τόδε μέλος, παρακοπά,  
παραφορὰ φρενοδαλῆς,  
ὕμνος ἐξ Ἐρινύων,  
δέσμιος φρενῶν, ἀφόρμικτος, αὐτὸνὰ βροτοῖς. 240

## ΑΘΗΝΑ

πρόσωθεν ἐξήκουσα κληδόνος βοήν  
ἀπὸ Σκαμάνδρου·  
ἔνθεν διώκουσ' ἦλθον ἄτρυτον πόδα,  
πτερῶν ἄτερ ροιβδοῦσα κόλπον αἰγίδος.  
καινήν δ' ὀρώσα τήνδ' ὀμιλίαν χθονὸς 245  
ταρβῶ μὲν οὐδέεν, θαῦμα δ' ὄμμασιν πάρα.  
τίνες ποτ' ἐστέ; πᾶσι δ' ἐς κοινὸν λέγω·  
βρέτας τε τοῦμὸν τῶδ' ἐφημένῳ ξένῳ,  
ὕμᾱς θ' ὀμοίας οὐδενὶ σπαρτῶν γένει.

- Ch.* Thou shalt hear all in brief, daughter of Zeus.  
We are Night's eternal children. In our homes  
Below the earth, the Curses are we called.  
Slayers of men we hunt forth from all homes.
- Ath.* And the slayer's flight—where is the end of it?
- Ch.* Where happiness is no more to be found.
- Ath.* Is the flight such whereon you hound this man?
- Ch.* Yes, for he dared to be his mother's murderer.
- Ath.* Was there no other power, whose wrath he feared?
- Ch.* What goad so strong as to compel matricide?
- Ath.* There are two parties here, and but one plea.
- Ch.* Well, question him, then judge with equity.
- Ath.* What reply, stranger, wouldst thou make to this?  
But tell me first thy country and thy lineage,  
And thy misfortunes; then repel this charge.
- Or.* Sovereign Athena,  
I seek no absolution, nor with hand  
Polluted to thine image do I cling.  
Long since have I been duly purified  
Elsewhere, with victim and with lustral stream.  
Hear now my race. In Argos was I born.  
My sire, to whom thy question fitly leads,  
Was Agamemnon, chieftain of warrior seamen,  
With whose aid thou didst make the city of Troy  
No more a city. He returning home  
Died shamefully, by my black-souled mother slain,  
Enveloped in a cunning snare, that still  
Remained as witness of that murderous bath.  
So I slew her who bare me, I deny it not,  
Requiting thus my beloved father's blood.  
And herein Loxias shares the guilt with me.  
If I did right or no, be thou the judge.  
Whate'er my fate, from thee will I accept it.



- Χο. πεύσει τὰ πάντα συντόμως, Διὸς κόρη. 250  
 ἡμεῖς γάρ ἐσμεν Νυκτὸς αἰανῆ τέκνα.  
 Ἄρα δ' ἐν οἴκοις γῆς ὕπαι κεκλήμεθα.  
 βροτοκτονούντας ἐκ δόμων ἐλαύνομεν.
- Αθ. καὶ τῷ κτανόντι ποῦ τὸ τέρμα τῆς φυγῆς ;
- Χο. ὅπου τὸ χαίρειν μηδαμοῦ νομίζεται. 255
- Αθ. ἦ καὶ τοιαύτας τῷδ' ἐπιρροίζεις φυγὰς ;
- Χο. φονεὺς γὰρ εἶναι μητρὸς ἠξιώσατο.
- Αθ. ἄλλαις ἀνάγκαις, ἢ τινος τρέων κότον ;
- Χο. ποῦ γὰρ τοσοῦτο κέντρον ὡς μητροκτονεῖν ;
- Αθ. δυοῖν παρόντων ἡμισυς λόγος πάρα. 260
- Χο. ἀλλ' ἐξέλεγε, κρῖνε δ' εὐθείαν δίκην.
- Αθ. τί πρὸς τὰδ' εἰπεῖν, ὦ ξέν', ἐν μέρει θέλεις ;  
 λέξας δὲ χώραν καὶ γένος καὶ ξυμφορὰς  
 τὰς σάς, ἔπειτα τόνδ' ἀμυναθοῦ ψόγον.
- Ορ. ἄνασσ' Ἀθάνα, 265  
 οὐκ εἰμὶ προστρόπαιος, οὐδ' ἔχων μύσος  
 πρὸς χειρὶ τῆμῃ τὸ σὸν ἐφεζόμεν βρέτας.  
 πάλαι πρὸς ἄλλοις ταῦτ' ἀφιερῶμεθα  
 οἴκοισι, καὶ βοτοῖσι καὶ ῥυτοῖς πόροις.  
 γένος δὲ τοῦμὸν ὡς ἔχει πεύσει τάχα. 270  
 Ἄργειός εἰμι, πατέρα δ' ἱστορεῖς καλῶς,  
 Ἄγαμέμνον', ἀνδρῶν ναυβατῶν ἀρμόστορα·  
 ξὺν ᾧ σὺ Τροίαν ἄπολιν Ἰλίου πόλιν  
 ἔθηκας. ἔφθιθ' οὗτος οὐ καλῶς, μολῶν  
 εἰς οἶκον· ἀλλὰ νιν κελαινόφρων ἐμῇ 275  
 μήτηρ κατέκτα, ποικίλοις ἀγρεύμασι  
 κρύψασ', ἃ λουτρῶν ἐξεμαρτύρει φόνον·  
 ἔκτεινα τὴν τεκοῦσαν, οὐκ ἀρνήσομαι,  
 ἀντικτόνοις ποιναῖσι φιλτάτου πατρός.  
 καὶ τῶνδε κοινῇ Λοξίας μεταίτιος. 280  
 σὺ δ' εἰ δικαίως εἴτε μὴ κρῖνον δίκην·  
 πράξας γὰρ ἐν σοὶ πανταχί τὰδ' αἰνέσω.

*Ath.* The matter is too grave for any mortal  
 To presume to try it: nor may I myself  
 Lawfully judge a case of passionate murder.  
 But since this cause has lighted on our city,  
 I will appoint judges of murder, bound  
 By oath, to be an ordinance for all time.  
 When I have chosen the best among my citizens,  
 I will return to sift this matter truly.

*Ch.* Now shall justice wholly fail<sup>1</sup>,  
 Fade and faint, cease to be,  
 If the slayer's wrongful plaint,  
 Here in plea, dare prevail.  
 Such a deed  
 Not a sinner but shall find  
 All too featly to his mind.  
 Give to fear her proper seat.  
 Still to watch the wanton thought  
 Let her sit, as just and meet:  
 Sigh and tear,  
 Wisdom must with these be bought.  
 Praise not thou the slavish lot,  
 And the lawless, praise it not,  
 Praise it not.  
 Blest is the mean; go thou ever between, and God  
 shall prosper the going.  
 Wisely sayeth the ancient rede,  
 "Naughtiness gendereth pride, as the fruit of the  
 But in the wholesome heart [seed":  
 Good hopes, good wishes start:  
 And good rewards the sowing.

<sup>1</sup> This Ode (lines 291-341) was translated by the late Dr A. W. Verrall.

- Αθ. τὸ πρᾶγμα μείζον, εἴ τις οἴεται τόδε  
 βροτὸς δικάζειν· οὐδὲ μὴν ἐμοὶ θέμις  
 φόνου διαιρεῖν ὄξυμηνίτους δίκας· 285  
 ἐπεὶ δὲ πρᾶγμα δεῦρ' ἐπέσκηψεν τόδε,  
 φόνων δικαστὰς ὀρκίους αἰρουμένη  
 θεσμὸν τὸν εἰς ἅπαντ' ἐγὼ θήσω χρόνον.  
 κρίνασα δ' ἀστῶν τῶν ἐμῶν τὰ βέλτατα  
 ἤξω, διαιρεῖν τοῦτό πρᾶγμ' ἐτητύμως. 290
- Χο. νῦν καταστροφαὶ νέων  
 θεσμίων, εἰ κρατή-  
 σει δίκαι τε καὶ βλάβαι  
 τοῦδε ματροκτόνου.  
 πάντας ἤδη τόδ' ἔργον εὐχερεῖ- 295  
 α συναρμόσει βροτούς.  
 ἔσθ' ὅπου τὸ δεινὸν εὔ,  
 καὶ φρενῶν ἐπίσκοπον  
 δεῖ μένειν καθήμενον·  
 ξυμφέρει 300  
 σωφρονεῖν ὑπὸ στένει.  
 μήτ' ἀνάρχετον βίου  
 μήτε δεσποτούμενον  
 αἰνέσης.  
 παντὶ μέσῳ τὸ κράτος 305  
 θεὸς ὄπασεν, ἄλλ'  
 ἄλλα δ' ἐφορεύει.  
 ξύμμετρον δ' ἔπος λέγω,  
 δυσσεβίας μὲν ὕβρις  
 τέκος ὡς ἐτύμως· 310  
 ἐκ δ' ὑγιεί-  
 ας φρενῶν ὁ πάμφιλος  
 καὶ πολύευκτος ὄλβος.



ἐς τὸ πᾶν δέ σοι λέγω,  
 βωμὸν αἰδεσάει δίκας·  
 μηδέ νιν  
 κέρδος ἰδὼν ἀθέφ  
 ποδὶ λάξ ἀτίσης·  
 ποινὰ γὰρ ἐπέσται.  
 κύριον μένει τέλος.  
 πρὸς τάδε τις τοκέων  
 σέβας εὖ προτίων  
 καὶ ξενοτί-  
 μους δόμων ἐπιστροφὰς  
 αἰδόμενός τις ἔστω.

315

320

325

ἐκὼν δ' ἀνάγκας ἄτερ δίκαιος ὢν  
 οὐκ ἀνολβος ἔσται·  
 πανώλεθρος δ' οὔ ποτ' ἂν γένοιτο.  
 τὸν ἀντίτολμον δέ φαμι παρβάδαν  
 ἄγοντα πολλὰ παντόφυρτ' ἄνευ δίκας  
 βιαίως ξὺν χρόνῳ καθήσειν  
 λαῖφος, ὅταν λάβῃ πόνος  
 θραυομένας κεραίας.

330

καλεῖ δ' ἀκούοντας οὐδὲν ἐν μέσῃ  
 δυσπαλεῖ τε δίνα·  
 γελᾷ δὲ δαίμων ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ θερμῷ,  
 τὸν οὔ ποτ' αὐχοῦντ' ἰδὼν ἀμαχάνοις  
 δύαις λαπαδνὸν οὐδ' ὑπερθέοντ' ἄκραν·

335

One touch of fate with swift surprise  
 Wrecks the gay freight; he sinks, he dies,  
 Lost and of none lamented!

*Ath.* Proclaim now, Herald: bid the folk be still.  
 And let the Tyrrhene trumpet, with shrill note  
 Piercing the heavens, filled with breath of man,  
 Utter its high-pitched message to the throng.  
 In silence let my ordinance be heard  
 By this whole city, for all time to come,  
 And by these, that their suit be rightly judged.  
 Sovereign Apollo, rule what is thine own.  
 How in this business, pray, art thou concerned?

*Ap.* I come, first to give witness,—for my house,  
 My hearth received this man as suppliant,  
 And it was I who purged him of this murder,—  
 To plead too for myself; for I was cause  
 Of his mother's slaying. Open thou the case  
 In such form as thy wisdom may think best.

*Ath.* The word is now with you. The case is opened.

*Ch.* Many we are, but briefly will we speak.  
 Sentence for sentence do thou make reply.  
 Say first, art thou thy mother's murderer?

*Or.* I slew her. That fact there is no denying.

*Ch.* Of the three falls already here is one.  
 But how it was you slew her, you must say.

*Or.* I will. With a sword I stabbed her in the throat.

*Ch.* And who suggested, who advised the deed?

*Or.* The oracle of this God. He bears me witness.

*Ch.* Did he, the seer, prompt you to matricide?

*Or.* Apollo, be thou witness now: pronounce  
 Whether it was with justice that I slew her.

δι' αἰῶνος δὲ τὸν πρὶν ὄλβον  
 ἔρματι προσβαλὼν δίκας  
 ὤλετ' ἄκλαυτος, ἄστος. 340

Αθ. κήρυσσε, κήρυξ, καὶ στρατὸν κατειργαθοῦ,  
 ἢ τ' οὖν διάτορος αἰθέρος Τυρσηνικῆ  
 σάλπιγξ βροτείου πνεύματος πληρουμένη  
 ὑπέρτονον γήρυμα φαίνεταιω στρατῶ. 345  
 σιγᾶν ἀρήγει καὶ μαθεῖν θεσμοὺς ἐμοὺς  
 πόλιν τε πᾶσαν ἐς τὸν αἰανῆ χρόνον  
 καὶ τούσδ', ὅπως ἂν εὖ διαγνωσθῆ δίκη—  
 ἀναξ Ἄπολλον, ὧν ἔχεις αὐτὸς κράτει.  
 τί τοῦδε σοὶ μέτεστι πράγματος λέγε. 350

Απ. καὶ μαρτυρήσων ἦλθον—ἔστι γὰρ νόμῳ  
 ἰκέτης ὄδ' ἀνὴρ καὶ δόμων ἐφέστιος  
 ἐμῶν, φόνου δὲ τοῦδ' ἐγὼ καθάρσιος—  
 καὶ ξυνδικήσων αὐτός· αἰτίαν δ' ἔχω  
 τῆς τοῦδε μητρὸς τοῦ φόνου. σὺ δ' εἴσαγε 355  
 ὅπως τ' ἐπίσταται τήνδε κύρωσον δίκην.

Αθ. ὑμῶν ὁ μῦθος, εἰσάγω δὲ τὴν δίκην.

Χο. πολλαὶ μὲν ἐσμεν, λέξομεν δὲ συντόμως.  
 ἔπος δ' ἀμείβου πρὸς ἔπος ἐν μέρει τιθεῖς.  
 τὴν μητέρ' εἶπε πρῶτον εἰ κατέκτονας. 360

Ορ. ἔκτεινα· τούτου δ' οὔτις ἄρνησις πέλει.

Χο. ἐν μὲν τόδ' ἤδη τῶν τριῶν παλαισμάτων.  
 εἰπεῖν γε μέντοι δεῖ σ' ὅπως κατέκτανες.

Ορ. λέγω· ξιφουλκῶ χειρὶ πρὸς δέρην τεμών.

Χο. πρὸς τοῦ δ' ἐπέισθης καὶ τίνος βουλευμάσι; 365

Ορ. τοῖς τοῦδε θεσφάτοισι· μαρτυρεῖ δέ μοι.

Χο. ὁ μάντις ἐξηγεῖτό σοι μητροκτονεῖν;

Ορ. ἤδη σὺ μαρτύρησον. ἐξηγοῦ δέ μοι,  
 Ἄπολλον, εἴ σφε σὺν δίκη κατέκτανον.

- Ap.* To you, the high court of Athena, honest  
Shall be my words. A prophet may not lie.  
Never from mantic throne have I said aught  
Save by command of Zeus, the Olympian Father.
- Ch.* So Zeus gave thee this oracle, that bade  
This Orestes to avenge his father's blood  
Regardless of a mother's claim to awe?
- Ap.* Nay, it was far worse shame that a noble man,  
Endowed with god-given royalty, should die,  
And that by a woman's hand.
- Ch.* So a father's fate, you say, wins more respect  
From Zeus, who himself enchained his old sire Cronos.
- Ap.* O loathly, brutish monsters, heaven-abhorred!  
Fetters he might undo: there is cure for that;  
Yea many the means to loosen what is bound.  
But when the dust hath swallowed a man's blood,  
Once dead, there is no raising of him then.  
No healing charm hath Zeus my father made  
For that: all else now high now low he shifts  
And turns about with no least breath of toil.
- Ch.* See what it means, thy plea in his defence.  
His mother's kindred blood he spilt on the earth.  
Shall his father's house in Argos yet be his?  
What altar of public worship shall he use?  
What brotherhood will admit him to its rites?
- Ap.* This too will I expound; and mark how justly.  
The mother of her so-called child is not  
Parent, but nurse of the young life sown in her.  
The male is parent: she, but a stranger to him,  
Keeps safe his growing plant, unless fate blight it.  
Of this truth I will show you evidence.  
A sire may beget without a mother. Here



- Απ. λέξω πρὸς ὑμᾶς τόνδ' Ἀθηναίας μέγαν 370  
 θεσμὸν δικαίως, μάντις ὧν δ' οὐ ψεύσομαι.  
 οὐπόποτ' εἶπον μαντικοῖσιν ἐν θρόνοις,  
 ὃ μὴ κελεύσαι Ζεὺς Ὀλυμπίων πατήρ.
- Χο. Ζεὺς, ὡς λέγεις σύ, τόνδε χρῆσμὸν ἄπασε,  
 φράζειν Ὀρέστη τῷδε, τὸν πατρὸς φόνον 375  
 πράξαντα μητρὸς μηδαμοῦ τιμὰς νέμειν ;
- Απ. οὐ γάρ τι ταῦτὸν ἄνδρα γενναῖον θανεῖν  
 διοσδότοις σκήπτροισι τιμαλφόμενον,  
 καὶ ταῦτα πρὸς γυναικός.
- Χο. πατρὸς προτιμᾷ Ζεὺς μόρον τῷ σῶ λόγῳ· 380  
 αὐτὸς δ' ἔδησε πατέρα πρεσβύτην Κρόνον.
- Απ. ὦ παντομισῆ κνώδαλα, στύγη θεῶν,  
 πέδαι μὲν ἂν λυθείεν, ἔστι τοῦδ' ἄκος,  
 καὶ κάρτα πολλὴ μηχανὴ λυτήριος·  
 ἀνδρὸς δ' ἐπειδὰν αἰμ' ἀνασπάσῃ κόνις 385  
 ἄπαξ θανόντος, οὔτις ἔστ' ἀνάστασις.  
 τούτων ἐπὶ δὲ οὐκ ἐποίησεν πατήρ  
 οὐμός, τὰ δ' ἄλλα πάντ' ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω  
 στρέφωσιν τίθησιν οὐδὲν ἀσθμαίνων μένει.
- Χο. πῶς γὰρ τὸ φεύγειν τοῦδ' ὑπερδικεῖς ὄρα· 390  
 τὸ μητρὸς αἰμ' ὄμαιμον ἐκχέας πέδοι  
 ἔπειτ' ἐν Ἄργει δώματ' οἰκήσει πατρός ;  
 ποίοισι βωμοῖς χρώμενος τοῖς δημίοις ;  
 ποία δὲ χέρνιψ φρατέρων προσδέξεται ;
- Απ. καὶ τοῦτο λέξω, καὶ μάθ' ὡς ὀρθῶς ἐρῶ. 395  
 οὐκ ἔστι μήτηρ ἢ κεκλημένου τέκνου  
 τοκεύς, τροφὸς δὲ κύματος νεοσπόρου.  
 τίκτει δ' ὁ θρώσκων, ἢ δ' ἄπερ ξένῳ ξένη  
 ἔσωσεν ἔρνος, οἷσι μὴ βλάβῃ θεός.  
 τεκμήριον δὲ τοῦδέ σοι δείξω λόγου· 400  
 πατήρ μὲν ἂν γένοιτ' ἄνευ μητρὸς· πέλας

My witness stands, child of Olympian Zeus,  
Who grew not in the darkness of a womb,  
Yet plant so fair no goddess could bring forth.

*Ath.* Has enough now been said; and may I bid  
These judges give their true and honest vote?

*Ch.* For our part, all our shafts have now been shot.  
I wait to hear how the issue shall be judged.

*Ath.* And you? Are you content I order so?

*Ap.* You have heard what you have heard. Friends, give  
your votes;

And let your hearts pay reverence to your oath.

*Ath.* Hear now my ordinance, people of Athens,  
Judges of the first trial for shed blood.  
Here for all time to come shall Aegeus' folk  
Meet as a jurors' council on this rock,  
The Hill of Ares. Thereon Reverence,  
And Fear, its kinsman, among my citizens  
Shall check wrong-doing night and day alike.  
Neither ungoverned nor tyrannical,  
Such rule I bid you venerate and maintain.  
Nor wholly from the city banish dread;  
For what mortal is righteous who fears naught?  
Such be your reverence and your righteous awe,  
And you shall have, to guard your land and town,  
A bulwark such as none elsewhere possess,  
Not mid the Scythians, nor in Pelops' isle.  
Pure from corruption, reverend, quick to wrath,  
Such the tribunal I establish here,  
A vigilant guardian of the land's repose.  
To exhort my citizens for times to come,  
At such length have I spoken. Now let each rise  
And take his ballot, and decide the cause  
With reverence for his oath. My words are ended.

- μάρτυς πάρεστι παῖς Ὀλυμπίου Διός,  
 οὐκ ἐν σκότοισι νηδύος τεθραμμένη,  
 ἀλλ' οἶον ἔρνος οὔτις ἂν τέκοι θεός.*
- Αθ. ἤδη κελεύω τούσδ' ἀπὸ γνώμης φέρειν 405  
 ψῆφον δικαίαν, ὡς ἄλις λελεγμένων;*
- Χο. ἡμῖν μὲν ἤδη πᾶν τετόξευται βέλος.  
 μένω δ' ἀκούσαι πῶς ἀγὼν κριθήσεται.*
- Αθ. τί γάρ; πρὸς ὑμῶν πῶς τιθεῖσ' ἄμομφος ᾧ;*
- Απ. ἠκούσαθ' ὧν ἠκούσατ', ἐν δὲ καρδία 410  
 ψῆφον φέροντες ὄρκον αἰδεῖσθε, ξένοι.*
- Αθ. κλύοιτ' ἂν ἤδη θεσμόν, Ἀττικὸς λεῶς,  
 πρῶτας δίκας κρίνοντας αἵματος χυτοῦ.  
 ἔσται δὲ καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν Αἰγέως στρατῶ  
 αἰεὶ δικαστῶν τοῦτο βουλευτήριον, 415  
 πέτρα, πάγος τ' Ἄρειος· ἐν δὲ τῷ σέβας  
 ἀστῶν φόβος τε ξυγγενῆς τὸ μὴ ἴδικεῖν  
 σχήσει τό τ' ἡμᾶρ καὶ κατ' εὐφρόνην ὁμῶς.  
 τὸ μῆτ' ἀναρχον μῆτε δεσποτούμενον  
 ἀστοῖς περιστέλλουσι βουλεύω σέβειν, 420  
 καὶ μὴ τὸ δεινὸν πᾶν πόλεως ἔξω βαλεῖν.  
 τίς γὰρ δεδοικῶς μηδὲν ἐνδίκως βροτῶν;  
 τοιούνδε τοι ταρβούντες ἐνδίκως σέβας  
 ἔρυμά τε χώρας καὶ πόλεως σωτήριον  
 ἔχοιτ' ἂν, οἶον οὔτις ἀνθρώπων ἔχει, 425  
 οὔτ' ἐν Σκύθαισιν οὔτε Πέλοπος ἐν τόποις.  
 κερδῶν ἄθικτον τοῦτο βουλευτήριον,  
 αἰδοῖον, ὀξύθυμον, εὐδόντων ὑπερ  
 ἐγρηγορὸς φρούρημα γῆς καθίσταμαι.  
 ταύτην μὲν ἐξέτειν' ἐμοῖς παραίνεσιν 430  
 ἀστοῖσιν ἐς τὸ λοιπόν· ὀρθοῦσθαι δὲ χρῆ  
 καὶ ψῆφον αἴρειν καὶ διαγνῶναι δίκην  
 αἰδουμένους τὸν ὄρκον. εἴρηται λόγος.*

- Ch.* Dangerous visitants are we to your land.  
Do not affront us then, I counsel you.
- Ap.* And I say, dread my oracles, wherein  
Zeus also speaks his will. Foil not their fruit.
- Ch.* You talk! But I, if I gain not my cause,  
Will soon revisit and chastise this land.
- Ap.* Among the young gods and the elder too  
You are despised. The victory shall be mine.
- Ch.* Since thy young violence over-rides our age,  
I wait to hear the verdict, still in doubt  
Whether to wreak my wrath against the town.
- Ath.* Mine shall this task be, to give judgment last;  
— And this my vote to Orestes will I reckon.  
For of no mother was I born: in all,  
Save to be wedded, with whole heart I approve  
The male. I am strongly of the father's side.  
Therefore a wife's fate shall I less esteem,  
Who slew her husband, the master of her house.  
Orestes wins, even with equal votes.  
Forthwith turn out the ballots from the urns,  
You judges to whom that function is assigned.
- Or.* O bright Apollo, how will the judgment go?
- Ch.* O Night, dark Mother, dost thou behold these things?
- Or.* For me 'tis now the noose, or life's light still.
- Ch.* For us, ruin, or worship without end.
- Ap.* Number aright the votes cast out, my friends.  
As you divide them, reverence honesty.
- Ath.* This man is acquitted of blood-guiltiness;  
For equal is the number of the lots.
- Or.* O Pallas! O thou saviour of my house!  
Yea, thus to my lost fatherland hast thou  
Restored me: and through Hellas men shall say,

- Χο. καὶ μὴν βαρεῖαν τήνδ' ὀμιλίαν χθονὸς  
ξύμβουλος εἰμι μηδαμῶς ἀτιμάσαι. 435
- Απ. κἄγωγε χρησμούς τοὺς ἐμούς τε καὶ Διὸς  
ταρβεῖν κελεύω μηδ' ἀκαρπώτους κτίσαι.
- Χο. λέγεις· ἐγὼ δὲ μὴ τυχοῦσα τῆς δίκης  
βαρεῖα χώρα τῆδ' ὀμιλήσω πάλιν.
- Απ. ἀλλ' ἔν τε τοῖς νέοισι καὶ παλαιτέροις 440  
θεοῖς ἄτιμος εἶ σύ· νικήσω δ' ἐγώ.
- Χο. ἐπεὶ καθιππάζει με πρεσβῦτιν νέος,  
δίκης γενέσθαι τῆσδ' ἐπήκοος μένω,  
ὡς ἀμφίβουλος οὔσα θυμοῦσθαι πόλει.
- Αθ. ἐμὸν τόδ' ἔργον, λοισθίαν κρῖναι δίκην· 445  
ψῆφον δ' Ὀρέστη τήνδ' ἐγὼ προσθήσομαι.  
μήτηρ γὰρ οὔτις ἐστὶν ἢ μ' ἐγείνατο,  
τὸ δ' ἄρσεν αἰνῶ πάντα, πλὴν γάμου τυχεῖν,  
ἅπαντι θυμῶ, κάρτα δ' εἰμὶ τοῦ πατρός.  
οὔτω γυναικὸς οὐ προτιμήσω μόρον 450  
ἄνδρα κτανούσης δωμάτων ἐπίσκοπον.  
νικᾷ δ' Ὀρέστης, κἂν ἰσόψηφος κριθῆ.  
ἐκβάλλεθ' ὡς τάχιστα τευχέων πάλους,  
ὅσοις δικαστῶν τοῦτ' ἐπέσταλται τέλος.
- Ορ. ὦ Φοῖβ' Ἄπολλον, πῶς ἀγὼν κριθήσεται; 455
- Χο. ὦ Νύξ μέλαινα μήτηρ, ἄρ' ὀρᾷς τάδε;
- Ορ. νῦν ἀγχόνης μοι τέρματ', ἢ φάος βλέπειν.
- Χο. ἡμῖν γὰρ ἔρρειν, ἢ πρόσω τιμὰς νέμειν.
- Απ. πεμπάζετ' ὀρθῶς ἐκβολὰς ψῆφων, ξένοι, 460  
τὸ μὴ ᾄδικεῖν σέβοντες ἐν διαιρέσει.
- Αθ. ἀνὴρ ὃδ' ἐκπέφευγεν αἵματος δίκην·  
ἴσον γὰρ ἐστὶ τὰρίθμημα τῶν πάλων.
- Ορ. ὦ Παλλάς, ὦ σώσασα τοὺς ἐμούς δόμους,  
γαίας πατρώας ἐστερημένον σύ τοι  
κατώκισάς με· καί τις Ἑλλήνων ἐρεῖ, 465

“He is again an Argive, and may dwell  
 In his sire’s heritage, by help of Pallas,  
 And Loxias, last of Him who ordaineth all,  
 The Saviour.” Pitying my sire’s fate, he looked  
 On these, my mother’s advocates, and saved me.  
 Farewell. May thou and this thy city’s people  
 Grapple your foes in a resistless grip,  
 Till safety and victorious arms be yours.

[*Exit* ORESTES.]

*Ch.* Oh shame, ye younger deities! The old, holy laws  
 Ye have ridden down, and stolen from our hands the  
     prey.  
 But I, dishonoured, grief-afflicted, heavily wroth,  
 On this land accurst  
 Poison, poison, woe for woe, drops of sterile influence  
 Will I drip down to earth, hot from my heart; and  
     thence  
 Birth-killing blight, bud-withering, (Oh revenge!)  
 Scattering over the ground,  
 Shall sow the soil with man-destroying blots of  
 Oh wail! wail!—How act now?                      [plague.  
 I am mocked, mocked.—A sore grief  
 To Athens be my wrongs!  
 Alas, heavy the wrongs  
 We bear, Maids of Night,  
 Mourning our loss of honour.

*Ath.* I pray you, do not grieve thus bitterly.  
 You are not vanquished; but in equal votes  
 The cause ends, fairly, not to your dishonour.  
 Then be not passionate; hurl no wrathful threats  
 Against this land, nor cause sterility

“*Ἀργεῖος ἀνὴρ αὖθις ἔν τε χρήμασιν  
οἰκεῖ πατρώοις, Παλλάδος καὶ Λοξίου  
ἕκατι, καὶ τοῦ πάντα κραινοντος τρίτου  
σωτήρος,*” ὃς πατρῶον αἰδεσθεῖς μόρον  
σώζει με, μητρὸς τάσδε συνδίκους ὀρών. 470  
*καὶ χαῖρε, καὶ σὺ καὶ πολιτισσοῦχος λεώς·  
πάλαισμ’ ἄφυκτον τοῖς ἐναντίοις ἔχοις,  
σωτήριόν τε καὶ δορὸς νικηφόρον.*

[*Exit ORESTES.*]

*Χο.* ἰὼ θεοὶ νεώτεροι, παλαιοὺς νόμους  
καθιππάσασθε κὰκ χερῶν εἴλεσθέ μου. 475  
ἐγὼ δ’ ἄτιμος ἅ τάλαινα βαρύκοτος  
ἐν γὰρ τὰδε, φεῦ,  
ἰὸν ἰὸν ἀντιπενθῆ  
μεθεῖσα καρδίας, σταλαγμὸν χθονὶ  
ἄφορον· ἐκ δὲ τοῦ 480  
λειχὴν ἄφυλλος, ἄτεκνος,  
ἰὼ δίκαι, πέδον ἐπισύμενος  
βροτοφθόρους κηλίδας ἐν χώρᾳ βαλεῖ.  
στενάζω; τί ῥέξω;  
γελῶμαι· δύσοιστα 485  
πολίταις ἔπαθον·  
ἰὼ μεγάλα τοι κόραι δυστυχεῖς  
Νυκτὸς ἀτιμοπενθεῖς.

*Αθ.* ἐμοὶ πίθεσθε μὴ βαρυστόνως φέρειν.  
οὐ γὰρ νενίκησθ’, ἀλλ’ ἰσόψηφος δίκη 490  
ἐξήλθ’ ἀληθῶς, οὐκ ἀτιμία σέθεν·  
ὕμεῖς δὲ μὴ θυμοῦσθέ μηδὲ τῆδε γῆ  
βαρὺν κότον σκήψητε, μηδ’ ἀκαρπῖαν

By shedding venomous drops of magic dew.  
 For here I promise you most faithfully  
 A cavern for your shrine in sacred ground,  
 Where on bright altars you shall sit enthroned,  
 Adored and worshipped by my citizens.

*Ch.* Oh wail! wail!—How act now?

I am mocked, mocked.—A sore grief  
 To Athens be my wrongs!  
 Alas, heavy the wrongs  
 We bear, Maids of Night,  
 Mourning our loss of honour.

*Ath.* Ye are *not* dishonoured: then restrain your wrath.  
 Being gods, plague not with spells a land of mortals.  
 I put my trust in Zeus: what need to say it?  
 Alone of gods I know the keys that open  
 The chamber where the thunder is sealed up.  
 But of that there is no need. Be counselled by me:  
 Sow not the earth with fruit of a wild tongue.  
 Calm the black billowing wave's fierce violence:  
 Become the revered partner of my home.

*Ch.* We to endure such a shame!

We the primaevally wise! thus domiciled, thus  
 Dishonouring, shameful thought! [housed!  
 I breathe forth passionate rage, uttermost wrath.  
 Oh! Oh! Shame! Foul!  
 What is this agony—this that assails my breast?  
 Hear my fury, O Mother [tricks,  
 Night: for the gods have robbed me by vile crafty  
 Stolen my ancient honours, brought low my pride.

*Ath.* I will indulge thy moods, for thou art elder.  
 But if you pass to a land of other folk,



- τεύξῃτ', ἀφείσαι δαιμόνων σταλάγματα.  
 ἐγὼ γὰρ ὑμῖν πανδίκως ὑπίσχομαι 495  
 ἔδρας τε καὶ κευθμῶνας ἐνδίκου χθονὸς  
 λιπαροθρόνοισιν ἡμένας ἐπ' ἐσχάrais  
 ἔξειν ὑπ' ἀστῶν τῶνδε τιμαλφουμένας.
- Χο. στενάζω; τί ῥέξω;  
 γελῶμαι· δύσοιστα 500  
 πολίταις ἔπαθον·  
 ἰὼ μεγάλα τοι κόραι δυστυχεῖς  
 Νυκτὸς ἀτιμοπευθεῖς.
- Αθ. οὐκ ἔστ' ἄτιμοι, μηδ' ὑπερθύμως ἄγαν  
 θεαὶ βροτῶν κτίσητε δύσκηλον χθόνα. 505  
 καὶ γὰρ πέποιθα Ζηνί, καὶ τί δεῖ λέγειν;  
 καὶ κλῆδας οἶδα δώματος μόνη θεῶν,  
 ἐν ᾧ κεραυνὸς ἐστὶν ἐσφραγισμένος·  
 ἀλλ' οὐδὲν αὐτοῦ δεῖ· σὺ δ' εὐπιθῆς ἐμοὶ  
 γλώσσης ματαίας μὴ κβάλης ἔπη χθονί, 510  
 καρπὸν φέροντα πάντα μὴ πράσσειν καλῶς.  
 κοῖμα κελαινοῦ κύματος πικρὸν μένος  
 ὡς σεμνότιμος καὶ ξυνοικήτωρ ἐμοί.
- Χο. ἐμὲ παθεῖν τάδε, φεῦ,  
 ἐμὲ παλαιόφρονα κατὰ τε γᾶς οἰκεῖν, 515  
 φεῦ, ἀτίετον μύσος.  
 πνέω τοι μένος ἅπαντὰ τε κότου.  
 οἰοὶ δᾶ, φεῦ.  
 τίς μ' ὑποδύεται, τίς ὀδύνα πλευράς;  
 θυμὸν ἄιε, μᾶτερ 520  
 Νύξ· ἀπὸ γὰρ με τι-  
 μᾶν δαναιᾶν θεῶν  
 δυσπάλαμοι παρ' οὐδὲν ἦραν δόλοι.
- Αθ. ὀργὰς ξυνοίσω σοι· γεραιτέρα γὰρ εἶ.  
 ὑμεῖς δ' ἐς ἀλλόφυλον ἐλθοῦσαι χθόνα 525

You will regret our Athens, I forewarn you.  
 For to her citizens time's stream shall flow  
 With larger honour; whilst thou, honourably  
 Enshrined by Erechtheus' temple, shalt receive  
 From adoring troops of men and women, more  
 Than thou couldst hope in the wide world beside.

*Ch.* We to endure such a shame!  
 We the primaevally wise! thus domiciled, thus  
 Dishonouring, shameful thought! [housed!

*Ath.* I will not weary of speaking thee fair words.  
 No, if divine Persuasion, the soothing charm  
 And magic of my tongue, be sacred to thee,  
 Then here abide: but if thou wouldst not stay,  
 Thou canst not justly afflict this city's folk  
 With wrath or hate, or do them any hurt.  
 For thou mayst claim thy portion in her soil  
 Rightfully, with all honourable worship.

*Ch.* Athena, what is this home thou offerest me?

*Ath.* One from all sorrow free. Accept it now.

*Ch.* Say I accept: what privilege shall be mine?

*Ath.* That without thee no household shall have increase.

*Ch.* Canst thou endow me with such power as that?

*Ath.* Aye, we will bless thy votaries with good fortune.

*Ch.* And wilt thou give me warrant for all time?

*Ath.* No need to promise what I would not do.

*Ch.* I feel thy soothing charm: my wrath abates.

We accept.

Here with Pallas let us dwell.

Scorn we not her citadel

By almighty Zeus and Ares cherished

As the fortress of the gods,

γῆς τῆσδ' ἐρασθήσεσθε· προυννέπω τάδε.  
 οὐπιρρέων γὰρ τιμιώτερος χρόνος  
 ἔσται πολίταις τοῖσδε. καὶ σὺ τιμίαν  
 ἔδραν ἔχουσα πρὸς δόμοις Ἐρεχθέως  
 τεύξει παρ' ἀνδρῶν καὶ γυναικείων στόλων, 530  
 ὅσων παρ' ἄλλων οὐποτ' ἂν σχέθοις βροτῶν.

Χο. ἐμὲ παθεῖν τάδε, φεῦ,  
 ἐμὲ παλαιόφρονα κατὰ τε γᾶς οἰκεῖν,  
 φεῦ, ἀτίετον μύσος.

Αθ. οὔτοι καμουμαί σοι λέγουσα τὰγαθά. 535  
 ἀλλ' εἰ μὲν ἀγνόν ἐστί σοι Πειθοῦς σέβας,  
 γλώσσης ἐμῆς μείλιγμα καὶ θελκτῆριον,  
 σὺ δ' οὖν μένοις ἄν· εἰ δὲ μὴ θέλεις μένειν,  
 οὐ τὰν δικαίως τῆδ' ἐπιρρέποις πόλει  
 μῆνιν τιν' ἢ κότον τιν' ἢ βλάβην στρατῶ. 540  
 ἔξεστι γάρ σοι τῆσδε γαμόρω χθονὸς  
 εἶναι δικαίως ἐς τὸ πᾶν τιμωμένη.

Χο. ἄνασσ' Ἀθάνα, τίνα με φῆς ἔχειν ἔδραν;

Αθ. πάσης ἀπήμον' οἰζύος· δέχου δὲ σύ.

Χο. καὶ δὴ δέδεγμαι· τίς δέ μοι τιμὴ μένει; 545

Αθ. ὡς μὴ τιν' οἶκον εὐθeneῖν ἄνευ σέθεν.

Χο. σὺ τοῦτο πράξεις, ὥστε με σθένειν τόσον;

Αθ. τῷ γὰρ σέβοντι συμφορὰς ὀρθώσομεν.

Χο. καὶ μοι πρόπαντος ἐγγύην θήσει χρόνου;

Αθ. ἔξεστι γάρ μοι μὴ λέγειν ἢ μὴ τελῶ. 550

Χο. θέλξειν μ' ἔοικας καὶ μεθίσταμαι κότου.

δέξομαι Παλλάδος ξυνοικίαν,

οὐδ' ἀτιμάσω πόλιν,

τὰν καὶ Ζεὺς ὁ παγκρατῆς Ἄρης τε

φρούριον θεῶν νέμει,

Crown of Hellas, guarding  
The altars of her deities.

Evil breath

Never blow to hurt her trees:

Such to Athens be my grace.

Never trespass hither scorching wind

To nip the budding eyes of plants.

May no blast of sterile

Blighting plague assail her fields.

And with double births let Pan

At the appointed season bless

The mothers of the thriving flock; and may rich

Teem with abundant offspring, [Earth

Gifts to thank the bounteous gods.

*Ath.* Hear with what wise speech into the pathway  
Of blessing they enter.

Stern and terrible though they appear, yet

Great gain shall they bring you, people of Athens.

If you repay them for kindness with kindness

And reverent worship, this shall your fame be,

To guide both your land

And city in the straight path of justice.

*Ch.* Joy to you, joy in the wealth that is each man's  
Joy be to this city's folk! [portion!

Lovers are you, and beloved,

Of the Virgin throned by Zeus.

Timely wisdom now is yours,

Sheltered under Pallas' wings,

Sacred in the Father's eyes.

*Ath.* Joy to you also! But before you I go;

For now will I show you your cavern shrines

ῥυσίβωμον Ἑλλά-  
νων ἄγαλμα δαιμόνων.

δενδροπήμων δὲ μὴ πνέοι βλάβα,  
τὰν ἐμὰν χάριν λέγω·  
φλογμός τ' ὀμματοστερῆς φυτῶν, τὸ 560  
μὴ περᾶν ὄρον τόπων,  
μηδ' ἄκαρπος αἰα-  
νῆς ἐφερπέτω νόσος,  
μῆλά τ' εὐθενούντα Πᾶν  
ξὺν διπλοῖσιν ἐμβρούοις 565  
τρέφοι χρόνῳ τεταγμένῳ· γόνος δὲ γᾶς  
πλουτόχθων ἐρμαίαν  
δαιμόνων δόσιν τίοι.

Αθ. ἄρα φρονούσαι γλώσσης ἀγαθῆς  
ὁδὸν εὐρίσκουσ' ; 570  
ἐκ τῶν φοβερῶν τῶνδε προσώπων  
μέγα κέρδος ὀρώ τοῖσδε πολίταις·  
τάσδε γὰρ εὐφρονας εὐφρονες αἰεὶ  
μέγα τιμῶντες καὶ γῆν καὶ πόλιν  
ὀρθοδίκαιον 575  
πρέψετε πάντως διάγοντες.

Χο. χαίρετε χαίρετ' ἐν αἰσιμίαισι πλούτου.  
χαίρετ' ἀστικὸς λεώς,  
ἴκταρ ἡμένας Διός  
παρθένου φίλας φίλοι 580  
σωφρονούντες ἐν χρόνῳ.  
Παλλάδος δ' ὑπὸ πτεροῖς  
ὄντας ἄζεται πατήρ.

Αθ. χαίρετε χυμείς· προτέραν δ' ἐμὲ χρῆ  
στείχειν θαλάμους ἀποδείξουσιν 585

By the sacred light of these your conductors.  
 With solemn sacrifice now let us speed you  
 To your homes in the earth. What will hurt this city,  
 Emprison it there; but whate'er bringeth gain,  
 Send forth to increase her with glory.  
 Lead now these newcomers on their way,  
 You my citizens, children of Kranaos:  
 And still in your hearts  
 For a kind deed let there be kind thoughts.

*Ch.* Joy to you, joy yet again with a double blessing,  
 All ye dwellers in this land  
 Deities and mortal men!  
 While in Pallas' town ye dwell,  
 And our rights as denizens  
 Reverence still, you shall not find  
 In your life's lot aught unkind.

*Ath.* Your prayers of benediction I commend,  
 And by bright-gleaming torch-light will conduct you  
 Unto your nether subterraneous homes,  
 Escorted by these ministrants, who guard  
 My image, (and with right; for 'tis the eye  
 Of Theseus' land), a fair-famed company  
 Of maidens and of wives and aged dames.  
 Drape now our guests in honourable robes  
 Of crimson. Let the lights move on before.  
 Erelong shall these new residents show their love  
 By prospering the manhood of our land.

CHORUS OF THE ESCORT

Pass on your way in the pride of your worship,  
 Night's dread Children, with glad-hearted escort.  
 (Silence now for our sacred song!)

πρὸς φῶς ἱερὸν τῶνδε προπομπῶν.  
 ἴτε καὶ σφαγίων τῶνδ' ὑπὸ σεμνῶν  
 κατὰ γῆς σύμεναι τὸ μὲν ἀτηρὸν  
 χώρα κατέχειν, τὸ δὲ κερδαλέον  
 πέμπειν πόλεως ἐπὶ νίκη. 590  
 ὑμεῖς δ' ἠγείσθε, πολιτισσοῦχοι  
 παῖδες Κραναοῦ, ταῖσδε μετοίκους.  
 εἴη δ' ἀγαθῶν  
 ἀγαθὴ διάνοια πολίταις.

Χο. χαίρετε, χαίρετε δ' αὖθις, ἔπη διπλάζω, 595  
 πάντες οἱ κατὰ πτόλιν,  
 δαίμονές τε καὶ βροτοί,  
 Παλλάδος πόλιν νέμον-  
 τες· μετοικίαν δ' ἐμῆν  
 εὖ σέβοντες οὔτι μέμ- 600  
 ψεσθε συμφορὰς βίου.

Αθ. αἰνῶ τε μύθους τῶνδε τῶν κατευγμάτων  
 πέμψω τε φέγγει λαμπάδων σελασφόρων  
 ἐς τοὺς ἔνερθε καὶ κάτω χθονὸς τόπους  
 ξὺν προσπόλοισιν, αἴτε φρουροῦσιν βρέτας 605  
 τοῦμὸν δικαίως. ὄμμα γὰρ πάσης χθονὸς  
 Θησῆδος. ἐξίκοιτ' ἂν εὐκλεῆς λόχος  
 παίδων, γυναικῶν, καὶ στόλος πρεσβυτίδων.  
 φοινικοβάπτοις ἐνδυτοῖς ἐσθήμασι  
 τιμᾶτε, καὶ τὸ φέγγος ὀρμάσθω πάρος, 610  
 ὅπως ἂν εὐφρων ἦδ' ὀμιλία χθονὸς  
 τὸ λοιπὸν εὐάνδροισι συμφοραῖς πρέπη.

## ΠΡΟΠΟΜΠΟΙ

βᾶθ' ὁδόν, ὧ μεγάλοι φιλότιμοι [στρ. α.  
 Νυκτὸς παῖδες, ὑπ' εὐφροني πομπᾶ,  
 εὐφαιμεῖτε δέ, χωρίται, 615

There within Earth's immemorial caverns  
Ritual worship and offerings await you.  
(Silence all as we wend along!)

Kind and loyal of heart to our land,  
Come, ye revered ones, pleased with the festive  
Flame-devoured torch, as you pass to your home.  
(Cry aloud a refrain to our chorus!)

Let Peace follow with flaring of torches.  
Burghers of Pallas, unto this ending  
Zeus the all-seeing and Fate have conspired.  
(Cry aloud a refrain to our chorus!)



γᾶς ὑπὸ κεύθεσιν ὠγυγίοισιν,  
 τιμαῖς καὶ θυσίαις περίσεπται,  
 εὐφραμεῖτε δὲ πανδαμεί.

[ἀντ. α.]

ἴλαοι δὲ καὶ εὐθύφρονες γᾶ  
 δεῦρ' ἴτε, σεμναί, ξὺν πυριδάπτῳ  
 λαμπάδι τερπόμεναι καθ' ὁδόν.  
 ὀλολύξατε νῦν ἐπὶ μολπαῖς.

[στρ. β.]

620

σπονδαὶ δ' εἰσόπιν ἔνδαιδες ἴτων.  
 Παλλάδος ἀστοῖς Ζεὺς ὁ πανόπτας  
 οὕτω Μοῖρά τε συγκατέβα.  
 ὀλολύξατε νῦν ἐπὶ μολπαῖς.

[ἀντ. β.]

625

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